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THE PRACTICABILITY OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

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The unknown apostle who wrote the wholesome letter to Titus, "his own son after the common faith," re-enforces his general doctrine of Christian ethics by a special application to the circumstances in which Titus finds himself at Crete. The Christian life, the apostle writes, is practicable even there. The Cretans, where Titus had been left "to set in order the things that are wanting," were, as one of themselves had said, "liars, beasts, and gluttons." "This witness," the writer agrees, "is true"; but this truth is precisely what gives an opportunity for Titus to teach the Cretans a "sound" or "healthful" doctrine of chastity, discretion, and gravity. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men." Crete was a good place for a Christian "to adorn the doctrine of God." The problem of the Christian life was not to run away from a bad place, but to serve it and save it. We should live "soberly, righteously, and godly," not in a world of our own choosing, but "in this present world." Soberly as concerns one's self, righteously as concerns one's neighbor, piously in one's relation to God,—these three laws made, according to the Apostle, a practicable rule of conduct for a young man of the first century in a vicious and pleasure-loving world.

But could a Christian teacher speak so confidently now? Is the Christian life practicable in this present world? Is it possible to live in the world as it now is, accepting its methods, participating in its business, involved in its social, economic, and political machinery, and at the same time maintain a sober, right-

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eous, and godly life, fit to adorn the doctrine of God? Amid the licentiousness and commercialism of modern society can a domestic life be so maintained that it may be with reasonable accuracy described as a Christian family? Amid the brutal competitions of modern industry can trade be administered and profits be made in ways which are consistent with Christian discipleship? Amid the plottings of national politics and the collisions of international interests can we fairly speak of a Christian civilization? Is the Christian life, in other words, practicable among the inevitable conditions of modern efficiency and happiness; or is it the survival of an idealism which, however beautiful it may once have been, has become impracticable today?

These questions have created in many thoughtful minds a profound sense of perplexity, and even of alarm. The world which confronts a modern man is very different from the provincial and primitive environment of the New Testament teaching; and even if this new world is less likely than that of Crete to produce liars, beasts, and gluttons, it seems quite as hard to adjust to the maxims of the Christian Gospel. A man in this modern world, for example, finds himself compelled by his circumstances to devote nine-tenths of his waking hours to the making of his living and the securing of a margin of income, but when he turns, in some hastily snatched interval, to the New Testament, he reads the unqualified command of Jesus Christ, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." Another man is trained in habits of economy and thrift, and reads, "Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor." A student of modern methods in charity is taught to distrust as a social menace the practice of indiscriminate relief, and then finds his modern science confronted by the saying, "Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." An unjustified attack is made on one's self or one's country, and resistance to it has to meet the words, which to Tolstoi made the central teaching of the Gospel, "If any man smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also." Must one not then choose between the idealism of the Gospels and the utilitarianism of modern life? Must he not frankly confess that the Christian law of conduct and the demands of commercial or political stability "in this present world" are incompatible with

each other, and that under the circumstances of modern civilization, which one can neither escape nor for the present transform, the Christian character has become an impracticable dream?

This conclusion, which shakes the very pillars of Christian loyalty, and leaves of Christian ethics nothing more than a picturesque ruin, overthrown by the earthquakes of modern change, has come to be accepted—sometimes with satisfaction, sometimes with grave reluctance—by many students who in all other respects are at opposite poles of opinion. On the one hand are the critics of Christianity who condemn it as incompatible with modern life; on the other hand are the apologists for Christianity who explain it as never designed for modern life.

"None of us are Christians," a distinguished English philosopher has said, "and we all know, no matter what we say, we ought not to be. . . . We have lived a long time now the professors of a creed which no one can consistently practise and which, if practised, would be as immoral as unreal."¹ "*Contemptus mundi*," a great German teacher has written, "alone is not Christianity, nor, on the other hand, can there be Christianity without an admixture of *contemptus mundi*."² "Christianity," declares Nietzsche with reckless rhetoric,³ "is the one great curse, the one great spiritual corruption." "It is our more strenuous and instinctive piety which forbids us to continue Christians." Far as such critics stand from each other in all other respects, they yet agree in the conclusion that the ethics of Christianity are impracticable for people who must live in the world as it is, and that we must turn to a Hegelian, or Hellenic, or Pagan law of conduct to find guidance among the conditions of the modern world.

The same conclusion is reached, from precisely the opposite side, by interpreters of the New Testament who find the record dominated by the thoughts and hopes of a special time and race, so that it forfeits all claim to universal significance. Such, for example, is the logical conclusion derived from the so-called eschatological, or apocalyptic, view of the Gospels. It has been of late pointed out with a fulness never before attempted that

¹ F. H. Bradley, *International Journal of Ethics*, October, 1894.

² F. Paulsen, *A System of Ethics*, tr. 1906, pp. 95, 96.

³ *Sämmtliche Werke*, 1895, viii, 270; xiii, 317.

much of the language of the Gospels and much of the literature which lies behind the Gospels is colored by the anticipation of an approaching catastrophe, which was to make an end of the existing social order and to usher in the Messiah's kingdom. This great expectation made, it is urged, the central motive of the teaching of Jesus, and preparation for this millennial revolution must have been to the first disciples a supreme concern.

It must be admitted that many passages of the Gospels go far to confirm this eschatological view. A millennial hope unquestionably burned in the hearts of the Hebrew people, and the ministry of Jesus no doubt fanned this hope into a flame. "Ye shall see the Son of Man coming in his glory"; "The time is at hand"; "There are some standing here who shall not taste of death until they see the Son of Man in his glory"; "Watch, make you ready"; "The fashion of this world passeth away"—these, and many similar prophecies of a world-judgment, repeat the warnings of an impending catastrophe which abound in the Apocalyptic writings. If, therefore, as is confidently argued, the cardinal principle of New Testament interpretation is to be found in this feverish anticipation of the end of the existing world, then the ethics of Christianity must be shaped by this expectation and must be appropriate, not to social conditions which are fixed or permanent, but to a fleeting and perishing world. There must be an *interim* ethics, acceptable to those only whose minds are dominated by the millennial dream. Christian ethics was a product of this early expectation and must share its fate. *Interim* conduct, adapted to a world that is to pass away, cannot be appropriate to a world that is permanent. "The ethics of heaven," as Paulsen has said, "cannot be at the same time the ethics of earth." When, therefore, the dreams of the early Christians proved to be illusory, and the later followers of Jesus were forced to adjust themselves to an unregenerated world, it became necessary either to abandon the ethical teaching of the Gospels or to transform it into principles which could be rationally obeyed. Christian conduct could not be permanently inspired by a manifest, even though a magnificent, mistake.

This conclusion, though it be defended as contributory to conservatism, is in fact completely destructive of Christianity as an

historical religion. The foundation of faith becomes, not the simple teaching of the Synoptic Gospels, but the mystical visions reported after the Master's death. "The final tendency of advanced theology," Dr. Forsyth does not hesitate to affirm,⁴ "is backward . . . and its great act of violence is the driving of a wedge between the Synoptics and the Epistles, between the message of Jesus and the Gospel of his apostles." The Synoptics exhibit, under this interpretation, "an incomplete situation, a raw audience, and an inchoate context of evidence." "It is in the Epistles that we have the essence of Christianity." The apostolic inspiration . . . takes as much precedence of his earthly and (partly) interim teaching as the finished work is more luminous than the work in progress." As another English writer has said, "Christ must be looked at in two ways; as the historical Jesus, who lived in Palestine, . . . and as the Eternal Christ. . . . When a man discards the claims of the historical Jesus he is guilty of the 'minor rejection'; but when he pushes away from him all desire or acceptance of the Ideal Christ, that involves what I may call the 'major excommunication.'"⁵

The first impression made by this new defence of the faith is that it turns the New Testament upside down. Paul, not Jesus, becomes the real founder of the Christian religion. The Epistles, not the Gospels, are its precious documents. Jesus was not understood until he was gone. Indeed, he did not understand himself. Orthodoxy thus becomes saved at the loss of historicity. The Sermon on the Mount and the Parables are subordinated to the mysticism of Christian tradition. "*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*." Christian faith is not likely to find itself strengthened by this undermining of its foundations. The creeds are but poorly defended when they are set in sharp contrast with the facts. Even more obvious, however, is the fact that Christian ethics on these terms become impracticable. We are left, not with a teaching of duty, but with a rapt communion of the spirit which is possible to the elect alone. Phrases like "the imitation of Christ" and "the discipleship of Jesus" have lost their meaning. Contemplation has supplanted obedience. The knowledge of the doctrine supersedes the doing of the will. Eschatology has elimi-

⁴ The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, 1909, pp. 133, 168, 169.

⁵ Lloyd, Studies of Buddhism in Japan, 1908, p. 29.

nated ethics. "There is nothing," as Professor Burkitt frankly confesses, "in the creeds about Christ as a teacher of the higher morality; in fact he is not spoken of as a teacher at all."

This sense of impracticability for the Christian character, which is thus a consequence alike of radical criticism and of reactionary ecclesiasticism, is confirmed by many other tendencies of modern life. Among these the most obvious is the effect which is likely to be produced by the un-Christian conduct of many who profess Christianity. If the current moral standards of Christian believers do not radically differ from those which prevail among other decent citizens, why should the Christian teaching be regarded as having unique authority? If self-sacrifice, generosity, and integrity are often found quite apart from religious profession, may not the Christian character be regarded as superfluous in modern life? Is it not probable that the prevailing standards of a time or place, the "social ethos," as Professor Sumner called it, is in fact governing habit and desire, even where religious faith appears to control? May not many people deceive themselves with the belief that they are disciples of Jesus Christ, when in fact they are children of their own age, or tradition, or race? If one should scrutinize his own conduct, might it not appear that the ideals of Christianity have become impracticable in the life he is compelled to lead?

A similar impression of impracticability may be felt if one turns from these unconscious witnesses of failure to the more heroic lives which propose to make a literal and rigorous use of the Gospel in their modern needs. When, for example, an exalted nature like that of Tolstoï breaks away from social ties, scorning and rebuking modern civilization as inconsistent with Christian faith, and at last, in the dark and cold of a Russian winter, abandons wife and family to secure for his last days Christian peace, what effect does this conduct make upon the modern mind? Reverence, honor, the hush of criticism in the presence of death—all these are world-wide, but this emotional admiration cannot disguise the hopeless impracticability of such a faith. Like the charge of Balaklava, it was magnificent but it was not war. It did not win the battle of life: it ran away from that battle. The ethics of Tolstoï, instead of facing the world, counselled a flight

from the world. Europe and Asia, as Harnack once said, met in Tolstoï, and Asia conquered. Oriental quietism became the ideal of the Christian character. Instead of saving others, Tolstoï fled from others to save himself; and by a curious Nemesis this final desire for isolation and peace was pitifully frustrated. Never was Tolstoï so much before the eyes of the world, or of so much trouble to his friends, as in his death. The lonely railway station where he lay became a camp where family and disciples guarded his last hours, and a score of reporters watched at the bedside of the old man whose supreme wish was to die alone.

If, then, says the modern man, this is Christian discipleship, it is simply not for me. If this is the sober, righteous, and godly life, then it cannot be lived "in this present world." For me and for millions like me there can be no retreat from things as they are. My ethics cannot be those of the runaway. Home and family, money-getting and money-spending, the temptations of commercial and social life—these are not to be eluded as snares for my soul. They are the essential conditions under which my soul must be saved, if saved it can be. If the Christian life means non-resistance, asceticism, monasticism, then, however beautiful and unworldly such a character may be, it must remain for me nothing more than an impracticable and unrealizable dream.

From this impression of the inapplicability of Christian ethics to modern life there have followed two sorts of consequences. On the one hand is the sentimental approval of a faith which cannot be reduced to practice. One may cherish the teaching without any idea of obeying it. Christian conduct becomes regarded as a Catholic layman may view the *vita religiosa* of the clerical orders. It is a counsel of perfection which few can accept, but which an unsanctified world may admire from afar. Thus there may ensue a view of the Christian life which is practically that of a looker-on; a conventional conformity which does not even propose to itself a genuine obedience. Certain incidents of experience—birth, marriage, and death—are consecrated to God; but the long years of work and play, of love and struggle, are ruled by motives of the world, the flesh, or the devil. One

comes to live on a left-over piety, as he may live on an inherited estate, without much thought of its origin or responsibility. The surface of life is smoothed by Christian ordinances and consolations, while the depths remain unperturbed. Thus one may be in practice a citizen of "the present world," but in theory, or in moments of profound sorrow and joy, a patron of "the sober, righteous, and godly life."

On the other hand is the more candid and open reaction from a code which is inconsistent with modern demands. If, it is argued, all that can be substituted for an incredible theology is an impossible ethics, then, it would seem, the Christian religion must be frankly discarded as inconsistent with modern thought. As the Pauline cosmology has retreated before the advance of science, so the ethics of the Gospels have become social obstructions or indorsements of wrong, and those who commit themselves to the modern spirit must, it is concluded, turn away, some with sorrow, and some with scorn. Like the men of the parable, they go their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise; while, here and there, bitterness and wrath possess one who recalls what was taught him as eternal truth, and he turns on these feeble arguments and slays them. It is folly to disguise from ourselves the extent of this defection, not only from the theology, but hardly less from the ethics of Christianity. The ominous fact confronts the modern world that a very large proportion, not only of the frivolous and superficial, but also of the serious-minded and cultivated, have simply dropped the motives of religion from among their habitual resources, and are supported in their experience by sanctions and consolations derived from science or art, from work or play. Much of this modern paganism is due, no doubt, to the reserve of science or to the preoccupation of business, but much is also due to the superfluous refinements of Christian theology and the unreal distinctions of Christian ethics.

Whatever may be the proportion of these various influences, the result is beyond dispute. We hear much of the alienation of the working-classes from religion, and new ways are bravely devised to reach the masses and to preach the Gospel to the poor. But this defection of the wage-earners, serious as it may be, does not compare in significance with the intellectual neutrality or

indifference of great numbers of the privileged and thoughtful. Fifty years ago Huxley, in a touching letter to Charles Kingsley, wrote: "Understand me that all the young men of science whom I know are essentially of my way of thinking. I know not a scoffer or an irreligious man among them, but all regard orthodoxy as you do Brahminism."⁶ What was then but a half-recognized alienation is now unmistakable and conspicuous. A man of science, not long ago, when asked his conclusions about religious problems, answered, "We simply do not think of these things at all." A cause is in serious danger when it begins to lose the loyalty of the best trained minds; and in spite of much rallying of forces, and reckoning of statistics, and munificence of giving, it can hardly be maintained that the motives and aims which habitually govern the thought and work of the typical man of this present world are chiefly derived from the creed or the code of the Christian Church. If Christian dogma seems to ask more than reason can give, and Christian morals to involve more than social stability can endure, then the chasm between the church and the world has become permanently impassable. The church stands apart from the world, like a mediaeval castle on its inaccessible height, picturesque but remote, a noble but an unfrequented ruin.

If, then, this impression of impracticability is so general and so undisguised both among critics and defenders of the Christian teaching, must it not be concluded that Christian loyalty is likely soon to be abandoned by rational and practical minds? Must it not be confessed that the sober, righteous, and godly life commended to Titus, though practicable in Crete, is incompatible with the inevitable conditions of the modern world, and that new motives must be found for personal and social morals? On the contrary, the considerations which have been enumerated indicate with precision where the problem of Christian teaching for the moment lies. What is the fundamental fallacy in these discouraging conceptions of Christian ethics? It is the confusion of the temporary, occasional, and incidental aspects of the Gospel with its universal, spiritual, and permanent message. Literalism applied to the New Testament—however reverent it may appear to itself to be—is essentially unhistorical. It forces

⁶ *Life and Letters*, 1900, i, 219.

each incident or phrase into the foreground of the picture, so that it has no environment of time or place, no shading or perspective; and that is to pervert history in the name of piety. A fact may be distorted quite as easily by false perspective as by false definition. The truth of history, as of nature, is to be found in the proportion and relation of facts.

When, for example, the eschatology of the Gospels is made the master-key of their meaning, it is not necessary to argue that this Messianic dream did not color the teaching of Jesus. He spoke the language of his own time and race, and he could clothe his spiritual purpose in no other form than that of the national expectation; but to drag this background of the Gospels into the foreground, and to find in Jesus merely a Hebrew enthusiast announcing a Utopian dream, is to distort the perspective of his teaching and to rob it of unity and insight. Nothing, in fact, is more unlike the teaching of Jesus than the apprehensive, excited, or nervous sense of an approaching catastrophe. His moral maxims are not based on an *interim* ethics adapted to a transitory world. On the contrary, they are—as the common sense of two thousand years has perceived—characterized by adaptability, universality, and permanence. “We cannot,” Harnack has lately said, “derive the ethical ideal from the eschatological.”⁷ There is nothing of an *interim* ethics, nothing feverish and evanescent, in humility, forgiveness, purity of heart, sacrifice, or service; yet these, and virtues like these, are the pillars of Christian ethics. The habitual attitude of Jesus in the presence of the great problems of experience has a serenity, assurance, and sympathy, far removed from the excited anticipations of abrupt and final change; and it becomes quite as probable that the vein of eschatological allusion which runs through the Gospel betrays the preconceptions of the Evangelists as that it reveals the teacher’s mind. “Jesus above the heads of his reporters” is, as Matthew Arnold said, a wise canon of New Testament criticism. The eschatological interpretation of the Gospels, in short, confuses color with form, by-product with main intention, and finds the ethics of Jesus impracticable because it sees them out of that perspective which gave them beauty and truth.

The same conclusion may be reached as one scrutinizes more

⁷ *Aus Wissenschaft und Leben*, 1911, ii, p. 267.]

closely the Christian quietism of Tolstoi. Much there unquestionably was in the teaching of Jesus which encouraged a retreat from the complexity of civilization to simplicity, poverty, and solitude. The ascetic life, through all the Christian centuries, has found itself fortified by many sayings of the Gospels. Unworldliness, serenity, and restraint are conspicuous notes of New Testament ethics. Jesus was an Oriental, and above the turbulent vicissitudes of his life brooded a spiritual calm like a spring sunset above the hills of Galilee. But to confuse Oriental imagery with universal principles, to single out a teaching of non-resistance as the core of the Gospels, to retreat from social obligations in the name of one who gladly shared them and was called a friend of wine-bibbers and publicans—all this, however heroic it may be, is not only an impracticable discipleship but a historical perversion. It mistakes the occasionalism of the Gospels for universalism. It pictures Jesus as posing before the glass of the future, proclaiming in every utterance a universal law, when in fact he is primarily concerned with the individual case immediately before him, and is applying universal laws to the interpretation and redemption of that single life.

The same false perspective may be observed in many other modern interpretations of the Gospels. Jesus was a friend of the poor and a critic of the rich. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me," he said, "to preach the Gospel to the poor." "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven!" "Woe unto you that are rich; blessed are ye poor." "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." What, then, it is hotly urged, was Jesus but a prophet of social revolution, a class-conscious socialist; and what was the new religion but an anticipation of the modern programme of a rearrangement in economic production, distribution, and exchange? "Christianity," Professor Nitti has said, "was a vast economic revolution more than anything else." "The democracy of property," an American socialist has written, "was the larger revelation of Christ."

Here again the sayings of the Gospels must be accepted in all their solemn and permanent significance. The deceitfulness of riches, the responsibility of talent, the solemn alternatives of the

dedication of wealth or its abnegation—these warnings or rebukes are as convincing as ever. But it does not follow from these sayings that Jesus was a curbstone agitator, inflaming a class-conscious conflict. The modern revolutionist, if he listens at all to the teaching of the Gospels, hears in it nothing but the confirmation of his own social creed. He seizes on fragmentary utterances with no regard to their connection or intention. It is one more instance of literalism distorting the record. It mistakes the by-products of the teaching for its main intention. Whatever social changes Jesus may have foreseen, his mind was primarily fixed on spiritual change. He was not a reformer, but a revealer. He was concerned not so much with the production of goods as with the production of goodness. "Who made me," he said, "a judge or a divider over you?" A changed world might issue from his teaching, but it was to issue from a change of heart. He was not, first of all, a socialist but a saviour. He came to convert not things but men. "The preaching of Jesus," Harnack has declared with emphasis in his last volume, "and the establishing of a new religious brotherhood were not essentially a social agitation; that is, they did not issue from an antecedent class-conflict or annex themselves thereto, and in general had no direct connection with the social revolutions of the ancient world."

These considerations of the fallacies of literalism seem to point to the conclusion that the Christian religion is a much larger thing than many of its critics, or even of its defenders, have supposed. It assumes many forms, but is exhausted by none. Its fragmentary utterances may become impracticable guides, while its total view of life, its general law of conduct, may have permanent practicability. The Gospels are perennially perplexing to the literalist because they say so many different things. If each verse must be regarded as of equal weight, then each should balance and confirm another. The fact is, however, that at many points the teaching is self-contradictory. At one moment Jesus counsels non-resistance, and at another moment commends soldierliness. At one time he welcomes the peace of God; at another he burns with indignation. He blesses the poor without scorning the rich. He welcomes solitude, but serves society. He

proclaims the kingdom of God as coming in outward clouds of glory, yet finds that kingdom within the human heart. To one person he says, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest"; to another he says, "If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross and follow." In one saying he commends social equality—"I will give unto this last even as unto thee"; in another saying he announces a law of cumulative inequality—"To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." What do these apparent inconsistencies indicate? Do they condemn the teaching as illogical and wavering, swayed by circumstances rather than steadied by principles? Must one select a single saying, erect it as a monumental teaching, and discard as an interpolation or gloss whatever does not harmonize with this central law? On the contrary, it is precisely at this point that the teaching discloses a character and scope which makes it a practicable guide for modern men. A witty American once said: "It is easy to die for an idea, if you have only one idea." The greatness of Jesus is seen in his having so many ideas, for any one of which men have been willing to die. His teaching is marked by sanity and poise among solicitations to excess; by many-sidedness, by sympathetic wisdom. Thus the variations in the teaching are precisely what give the key to its interpretation. They forbid the attempt to fix one saying in the centre of the Gospel and all else in its circumference. They correct the reverent but misleading desire to study each occasional saying as a universal truth. They compel one to penetrate through the occasionalism of the teaching to the principles which these incidental utterances disclose, and to apply to new and unprecedented conditions a teaching which necessarily used the language and met the needs of its own time; in short, to pass from the letter of the Gospels to the spirit of the Gospels, and to confess, with Paul, that the letter killeth while the spirit giveth life. "True Christianity," a great English teacher has said,⁸ "is not something which was published in Palestine and which has been handed down by a dead tradition ever since; it is a living and growing spirit, that learns the lessons of history, and is ever manifesting new powers and leading on to new truths."

On this conclusion depends the practicability of the Christian

⁸ Edward Caird, *Lay Sermons and Addresses*, 1907, p. 67.

life. If the teaching of Jesus were a fixed deposit of revelation from which successive ages must draw their moral code, then the ethical supply might become exhausted as the demand of the world increased. A teaching fit for Galilee may become inapplicable to modern Europe. "Give to him that asketh of thee," may be good ethics in the simplicity of Nazareth and bad economics in the complexity of London. If the Christian life must conform to the conditions under which the Gospel teaching was originally given, then it is unquestionably true that we are "none of us Christians, and we know we ought not to be." It is, however, misdirected reverence which thus reduces the Christian religion to an unalterable fixity. The purpose of Jesus Christ was to free religion from this asphyxiation by the temporary, the technical, the external, and to give it room to breathe and to grow.

To reach this conclusion one has only to recall the characteristic language in which the general purpose of Jesus is described. As one reads the Gospels there meet him two great words which announce the nature of the teaching like recurring *motifs* reiterating a central theme. The first is the word Power; the second is the word Life. The first is the characteristic word of the Synoptic Gospels: "The multitude glorified God which had given such power unto man." "His word was with power." "Until the kingdom of God come with power." The second is the word of the Fourth Gospel: "I am the bread of life." "The life was the light of men." "He that hath the Son, hath life." "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." "I am come that they may have life." But Power and Life are words, not of opinion or tradition, but of expansion, vitality, momentum, growth. They are the symbols of a dynamic faith. Power is generated to be applied. Life is given to be transmitted. To restrict power is to waste it; to save life is to lose it. The Christian life is thus not a thing to keep, but a thing to give; not an ancient tradition, but a new creation; not a stopping-place, but a way. "I am the way," said Jesus. The first title given to the new religion by its followers was "The Way." It was the power of God unto salvation. "Salvation," a great English teacher said,⁹ "is nothing else than the preservation, restoration

⁹ Hort, Hulsean Lectures, p. 101.

and exaltation of life." The Christian character is thus a living and expanding growth. The kingdom of God is like leaven, or like a great tree ; but leaven is a pervasive influence, the tree is an unfolding growth. Christian ethics is a science of spiritual dynamics. It deals with a world in motion. Its purpose is to communicate Power; its aim is to increase Life. When the Council of Trent explicitly anathematized the opinion that "Christ was given to mankind as a Redeemer, and not also as a legislator," it made the issue clear. The Christian religion as a form of legislation stands forever over against the Christian religion as a way of redemption. On the one hand is the imperial conception of the Church of Christ, on the other the spiritual conception. A form of government, a legislating hierarchy, has in its very nature the qualities of inflexibility and fixity. A Life, a Power, a redemptive force, has in it perennial possibilities of expansion and adaptation. "Truth," said John Milton, "is compared in Scripture to a streaming fountain. If her waters flow not in a perpetual progression, they sicken into a muddy pool of conformity and tradition."

We are brought through these considerations to a most obvious and yet a most challenging and humbling conclusion. "Not even now," said John Stuart Mill, "would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation for the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete than to endeavor so to live that Christ would approve of our life." Do not these reverent words disclose to us the nature of Christian ethics and the permanent practicability of the Christian life? It is a "translation from the abstract to the concrete"; the acceptance, not of a teaching, but of a teacher; not of a word recorded in documents, but of a word made flesh. The characteristic mark of the Christian life is its personal relationship. It is the intimacy of companionship, the loyalty of discipleship. Behind all the teachings of Jesus Christ concerning universal problems of God and man, of eschatology or ethics, lies his supreme concern for the individual and for the needs of personality; and behind all questions which the study of the Gospels may raise concerning the universe or the social order lies the response of the individual will to the summons of a Master. Jesus has been called the greatest of

socialists; but he may with no less justice be called the greatest of individualists. He had what the author of *Ecce Homo* called a passion for personality. He sought the one sheep, he found the one lost coin, he called the lost son back to his father and to himself; and from that time to this, however much the Christian life has been obscured and complicated by theologians or ecclesiastics, the vitality and continuity of discipleship have been secured by this perennial loyalty of the individual will, this translation of virtue from the abstract into the concrete.

This relation of character to character emancipates the modern Christian from all that is contemporary or incidental in the teaching of Jesus. One does not expect a teacher of another age to speak the language or answer all the problems of the modern world. His message must be given to his own time and colored by the habits of thought which then prevailed. But the teacher behind the teaching, the influences which he described as those of Power and Life, remain independent of historical conditions and are applicable to all ages. Personality, character, spirituality, idealism, vision, communion with God, have in them a quality of timelessness, and are capable of expansion, transmission, and utilization in all the varied conditions of a changing world. The problems of life shift with the shifting years, but the nature of life remains unchanged, and responds to the Life which is the light of men. The machinery of the world must be renewed and amplified with each generation; but the power which makes that machinery move towards spiritual ends remains the same which once made the multitude glorify God who had given such Power unto men. The mechanism halts till the power is applied, and as that power finds its way, like the mysterious force of electricity, along all the avenues of life, and enters the homes and work and darkness and cold of the modern world, then the question of the practicability of the Christian life is supplanted by the question of its utilization; and it is as though the wires which carry the Power sang above our heads, "I am come that these may have my Life, and may have it abundantly."

WHAT IS THE SUPERNATURAL?

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What the supernatural is depends on what nature is. And nature is regarded from two widely different points of view. The first of these is shown in Richard Watson Gilder's sonnet:—

THE CELESTIAL PASSION

O white and midnight sky! O starry bath!
 Wash me in thy pure, heavenly, crystal flood;
 Cleanse me, ye stars, from earthly soil and scath;
 Let not one taint remain in spirit or blood!
 Receive my soul, ye burning, awful deeps;
 Touch and baptize me with the mighty power
 That in ye thrills, while the dark planet sleeps;
 Make me all yours for one blest secret hour!
 O glittering host! O high angelic choir!
 Silence each tone that with thy music jars;
 Fill me even as an urn with thy white fire
 Till all I am is kindred to the stars!
 Make me thy child, thou infinite, holy night—
 So shall my days be full of heavenly light!

The second attitude is expressed in Matthew Arnold's

IN HARMONY WITH NATURE

To a Preacher

"In harmony with Nature?" Restless fool,
 Who with such heat dost preach what were to thee,
 When true, the last impossibility—
 To be like Nature strong, like Nature cool!
 Know, man hath all which Nature hath, but more,
 And in that *more* lie all his hopes of good,
 Nature is cruel, man is sick of blood;
 Nature is stubborn, man would fain adore;
 Nature is fickle, man hath need of rest;
 Nature forgives no debt, and fears no grave;
 Man would be mild, and with safe conscience blest.
 Man must begin, know this, where Nature ends;
 Nature and man can never be fast friends.
 Fool, if thou canst not pass her, rest her slave!

Here are two radically different attitudes toward nature. The one sees in the stars the redeeming power, the cleansing bath. The highest to which man can look is that all he is "be kindred to the stars." According to the other attitude all that is of value in man is that which is above nature. "In that *more* lie all his hopes of good." If man is to live the life of freedom, he must not submit to nature, but overcome her. "Fool, if thou canst not pass her, rest her slave."

In the presence of a contradiction so radical we cannot have a mere contradiction, or a mere difference of opinion, of feeling, or of philosophy. Minor differences may be thus explained, but fundamental differences suggest an essential ambiguity. What is it that is meant by "nature" and by that which in Arnold's phrase is "*more*"? Can we get a meaning for the *more*? Can we get any conception of the supernatural that shall be free from ambiguities?

The road is indeed paved with ambiguities. Perhaps no word in common philosophical or theological use is more full of them than the word "nature," and, *ergo*, the word "supernatural." The word "nature" means, for example, the created world. It means the totality of all existence. It means the physical universe as distinct from man. It means essence or character. And the word "supernatural" of course shares these ambiguities. The supernatural may mean that which is above the created order of things. It may mean the spiritual as distinct from the physical. It may mean the miraculous, considered as an event outside the course of nature, produced by divine action. Popularly, it means ghosts. Ecclesiastically, it has been used to mean a sort of hypostasized grace conveyed by the church and sacraments. Here is confusion of every kind. No very cheerful prospect lies before one who would discuss the supernatural. It is like wrestling with Achelous. No sooner have you secured what you think to be a firm hold than the elusive adversary assumes another form. Is not the word an impossible one? To the scientific mind it smacks of offence. It suggests the irrational. The truth that it contains seems to be so imperfectly expressed as to arouse unnecessary opposition. Why not give up the word "supernatural" altogether?

I am not especially interested in the word. But the fact is that words lie largely beyond our control whether for use or disuse. "When I use a word," said Humpty Dumpty, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less." But most of us are not so fortunate. We cannot get rid of a word. Others will go on using it. Can we find any consistent meaning for the word "supernatural"? Can we find any common meaning, or at least any common tendency, in its use?

Let us at first drop the word and then come back to it later. This much is evident. In dealing with the facts of the physical world there are two different attitudes in which we can approach them, two different questions which we can ask about them. We can ask the question "Whence?" and we can ask the question "Why?" In other words, we can concerning any event ask the question as to its mechanical or physical cause, that which in modern speech is somewhat loosely called efficient cause, and we can ask the question as to the final cause, or end, or purpose. By efficient cause in this sense is meant the antecedent conditions which lie behind an event and of which it is the outcome. By final cause is meant the purpose which the event is intended to serve. The fire is the efficient cause of the boiling of the kettle. Its final cause is to make the tea.

Now the study of efficient causes taken in this sense is the business of science. Every event that happens in the physical world is the result or expression of antecedent conditions. Science assumes, indeed rests upon, the regularity of sequence between these conditions and the resulting event. It may disclaim the study of cause in any metaphysical sense. It may know nothing theoretically of necessary connection. But cause in the sense of invariable sequence between phenomena is the subject of all science. In this sense, *Scientia est cognoscere causas*. It reduces all phenomena to physical laws, that is to invariable sequence. And it expects with unfailing certitude that, given the same conditions, the result will be invariable. If in any experiment the result varies, then it follows that some unknown factor has intervened, and the attempt is made to find that factor. Science claims rightly the whole field of physical phenomena as lying under invariable law.

I say the whole field of physical phenomena. But it is hard to draw any line. Will science be content to stop there? Should it not try to reduce mental phenomena to a similar uniformity? Through the study of physiological psychology it tries to detect an unvarying relation between brain movements and the facts of consciousness. Our methods of investigation are here extremely imperfect. The complexity of the relation is more fully recognized than it used to be. Few, if any, will now accept the saying that the brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile. Nevertheless, the belief in uniformity is so strong that we can hardly escape the conclusion that brain movements are concomitant with psychical states. If there could be an exhaustive knowledge of a living human brain, it is at least conceivable that that knowledge would include a knowledge of the thoughts of the man to whom the brain belongs. Such a result would be a new triumph for science. The attempt to reach it is entirely legitimate. We can never say to science, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further." There is no limit to the possible validity of the scientific explanation in its attempt to explain phenomena by antecedent conditions, as the result of efficient causes.

But now there is a great class of facts for which this explanation alone does not suffice. Pick up a book and ask what is its cause. One answer is in terms of the printing-press and the bindery and all the antecedent conditions out of which the book proceeds. Such an account may be exhaustive and inclusive. It may state every physical antecedent which goes to make up the book. Then, having got all this knowledge, we find our answer absolutely incomplete. The book was written for a purpose. It is the expression of intelligence and will. In reading it we are in the presence, not of the printing-press and the bindery, but in that of the mind and will of the author. In order to get any full explanation of the book, we must ask not after its efficient cause alone, but after its final cause, its purpose. We must ask not only, Whence? but Why? To leave this out is to leave out the most important matter. Some one finds a clay brick in Babylonia and brings it to a scientist, who analyzes the clay, and tells just what pressure was needed to give it that form and to imprint certain marks which are on it. There we have the explanation

of the brick, the full account of the antecedent conditions that produced it, its complete explanation in the terms of physical or efficient cause. Then comes along a Babylonian scholar, and he says to the scientist: "You are all right so far as you have gone. Only you have missed the target altogether. You have left out the essential thing. This brick was written by a king to convey to posterity the account of a victory." The scientist has given the efficient cause of the brick, the critic its final cause.

It is no easy problem to solve the relation between these two kinds of explanation. Here is the Brooklyn bridge. It is built strictly in accordance with the uniformity of nature's laws. Only by that uniformity does it stand. Every ounce of its material is supported by the physical conditions that surround it. The bridge is the inevitable result of the physical conditions that brought it forth. Given those conditions, no other result is conceivable. But the bridge was built to carry passengers from Brooklyn to New York and back again. It is the expression of that purpose carried out by human intelligence. Without that purpose and that intelligence no ounce of its material would stand where it does to-day. The bridge depends on the uniformity of nature's laws, and yet it would never have been the result of those laws unless they had been controlled by human intelligence and will.

The advance of science in the last century has been unparalleled. And that advance has been steadily in the discovery of the uniformity of the laws of nature. The reign of law, absolute, unyielding, rigid law, was the postulate, as it was the ever renewed discovery, of the scientific method. Yet through that uniformity man's control over nature grew apace and constantly produced results that were far from uniform. Man has subdued the powers of nature to his will. The face of the earth has been changed. Nature is under our control. In and through the deeper knowledge of efficient causes there has come the immensely greater opportunity for the display of final cause. Through the uniformity of nature we subject nature to our will.

Now in regard to these two sets of explanation we have a hard philosophical problem. How does mind, purpose, will, intelligence, come into relation with the uniform chain of physical

causes? How is it possible to maintain these two theses: first, that every physical event is the inevitable outcome of antecedent conditions; and, secondly, that intelligence and will can produce results that would not otherwise take place? I shall not attempt to deal with the various answers to this problem, whether from the point of view of materialism, of idealism, of mutual interaction, of mind-stuff, of pre-established harmony, or of concomitance. It is an unsolved problem. But this much is to be said. No solution can claim a hearing that leaves out the effect of the human will on the physical world. Man does subdue the face of the earth, and his past successes are but the prelude to mightier ones to come. No emphasis on the uniformity of law can lead us to disbelieve in the fact of human control of that uniformity. No reconciliation of the lion-and-lamb kind, in which the lamb of final cause lies down inside the lion of efficient cause, can be accepted. No philosophy is adequate that does not recognize the control of man over the physical world.

If all this be true, we have one element with which to approach the question of the supernatural. Natural science is exclusively occupied with the study of efficient causes, or, if you prefer, of regular uniformity, of natural law. Ever since Bacon it has been shy of final causes. Bacon said that in physics the investigation of final causes is like a consecrated virgin, it produces nothing. Physical science cannot use them, for they are not in its domain. Nevertheless, as soon as we begin the study of the phenomena in which man is concerned, then final causes enter in. The study of history may be a science, but it is not a natural science. Buckle's attempt is forever discredited. No one can explain history without taking into account the ideals, the aspirations, the intelligence, the will—in one word, the personality, of man.

If we accept the word "nature" as that which forms the subject of natural science, then we have in personality that which is in the strict sense super-natural. In the midst of physical conditions we have the guiding force of intelligence and will. The field of the supernatural is the field of personality, the field in which is manifest the activity of final causes.

If any one objects to this use of the word "supernatural," we

will not insist upon it. It is partly a matter of words. What I am concerned with is that we have a class of facts which demand a kind of interpretation with which physical science is not concerned, and it is by this interpretation that we are to approach the supernatural. It is a matter of terms as to whether we call human action supernatural. The real question of the supernatural is as to whether in and through the physical universe and the field of history there is active the force of intelligence and will other than that of man. Do final causes come from man alone? Or are there final causes which are the effect of a superhuman Being?

In this sense Bacon fully recognized the presence of final causes. But he assigned them to metaphysics and not to physics. "And I say this, not because those final causes are not true and worthy to be inquired in metaphysical speculations; but because their excursions and irruptions into the limits of physical causes has bred a waste and solitude in that track. For other wise, if they be but kept within their proper bounds, men are extremely deceived if they think there is any enmity or repugnancy at all between the two." (*De Augmentis Scientiarum*, Book iii, chap. iv.) According to Bacon, physical causes and final causes work together. Where the physicist sees the working of physical causes, the metaphysician may see the working of God. To trace the working of divine purpose in and through the physical world is the task not of physics, but of metaphysics.

It is also the task of religion. Herrmann has defined religion as the ability of a man to see in events the actions of a god. The definition may not be adequate as a definition of religion, but it is at any rate a description of that which belongs to the religious attitude. The religious man sees in nature and in history the action of God. He claims the right to interpret nature and history as the manifestation of a divine plan. He claims the right to apply the judgment of final cause to the whole field of his experience.

There are, then, two aspects under which the whole field of human experience may be regarded. It may be regarded as the resultant of previous conditions. That is the attitude of science. Or it may be regarded as the expression of divine intelligence and

will. That is the attitude of religion. It may be regarded as the result of efficient causes, it may be regarded as the working out of final cause or end. It may be looked upon as the result of natural forces, it may be looked at as the plan of a supernatural Being.

The difference between natural and supernatural is not therefore a difference in the field of experience. It is a difference in the attitude in which the whole field of experience is surveyed. It is all to be regarded as a natural product. It is all to be regarded as the expression of a supernatural plan.

The thought here presented admits of application to several different problems. And first to the somewhat worn theme of the relation between science and religion. The attempt is often made to reconcile the two by a division of the field. Certain classes of facts are assigned to science and certain other classes to religion. Such a division is not satisfactory and can never lead to a true reconciliation. It can at the best produce an armed truce. Science demands all the facts, and legitimately tries to reduce them to uniform sequence or law. Nothing can be held back from scientific investigation. But religion also demands all the facts, and claims the right to regard them all as the operation of God. No conflict is conceivable, for there is no division of the field. Each claims rightly the whole field, and each regards the whole field from its own point of view.

The position here maintained is similar to that of Bushnell in his great work, "Nature and the Supernatural." But there is one marked difference. While Bushnell considers the supernatural to be the personal, yet he never succeeds in overcoming the idea of an opposition between the personal and the physical. Thus he considers that, in order to find the supernatural presence of God, we must find the appearance from time to time of phenomena which cannot be accounted for by previous conditions, and which therefore reveal a new creative act of God. But that view leads to-day to an absolute antagonism with science, which will not allow any phenomenon to be outside the field of its investigation. Bushnell is excusable because he wrote before the modern view of evolution. "Nature and the Supernatural" was published in 1858, one year before the "Origin of the Species." But other more

modern writers offend in the same way with less excuse. Even Martineau seems to think that natural selection endangers teleology, and he looks for evidence of design in that which lies outside the reach of scientific explanation. The same half-hearted attitude prevails generally in Christian Apologetics. The last remnant of it ought to disappear. The scientific explanation is one thing, and has its rights everywhere. The religious explanation is another thing, and has its rights everywhere. Conflict arises only by a false and arbitrary division of the field. Each has the whole field, and the field is the world.

Objection may be made that the relation between these two modes of explanation is not clear. How can an event be at once the outcome of physical conditions and at the same time the expression of the divine will? The answer is that, if there be any difficulty, it is only the same difficulty that attends human action in its relation to the physical world. How is a house the result of natural law and at the same time the expression of intelligence and will? So long as the difficulty of answering this question does not prevent our belief that the house was made to live in, so long will the same difficulty not prevent us from seeing in nature the expression of the divine will. The theological interpretation is no harder than the anthropological.

Secondly, we may apply this conception to the idea of miracle. The religious man sees in all nature and all history the action of God. He looks at the universe and says, "Thou art a God that doest wonders." No dominance of natural law can prevent him from seeing the presence of divine action. So strong is his conviction that he will preserve it if necessary in the face of contradiction. If he is forced to believe that divine and physical action are opposed, then he will believe in the divine action all the same. In that case he will suppose that the laws of nature are occasionally set aside by the act of God. He will believe in miracles *contra naturam*. "Das Wunder ist des Glaubens liebstes Kind"—"Miracle is faith's dearest child." But a deeper insight will show that the sacrifice of reason was unnecessary. The opposition is a false one. Divine and physical action are not opposed. The miracle is the divine side of an event. It has been said that Saint Augustine's statement that everything is a miracle amounts

to saying that nothing is a miracle. But that does not do justice to Augustine's position. Augustine does not mean to confound the natural and the supernatural, to reduce the spiritual to the physical. In every event of nature he sees a divine side. And that divine side is the miracle. It is exceptional only to our knowledge. Augustine is right. To a deeper insight every event will be seen to have its divine side, its personal meaning, its place in the divine plan. We shall see in every event the working of God, without thereby supposing a disturbance of nature's laws. A man's house is a human miracle. It is that which nature alone could never produce. The universe is God's miracle. It is his house carrying out his plan. "For every house is builded by some one; but he that built all things is God."

Thirdly, we may apply this conception to the question of the transcendence and immanence of God. These terms are misleading. They are spatial. And spatial terms can never satisfactorily express spiritual realities. The result is confusion. The one term says that God is in the world and the other says that he is not. And we try to arrive at truth by a kind of compromise between the two contradictory statements, or by a union of both. Would that we could get rid of the terms altogether! As we cannot, we must translate them into terms of personality. Certainly no one wishes to think of God as apart from the universe, sitting on a distant throne. On the other hand, in trying to think of him as present in nature and history, we are too apt to identify him with naturalistic forces, and thus to make his presence not essentially different from that of nature itself. To escape the dilemma we must give up the spatial concept and introduce the spiritual. God is present in the same sense that a man is present to the material that he controls and by which he reveals his thoughts and purposes. Take the most trivial example. In a successful billiard stroke the player is present in the balls. His thought and purpose are manifested in the stroke. Yet that is true only because the player is superior to and in control of his material. The question is not one of distance. It is a matter of no importance how long the cue is, or where the player stands. Distance is annihilated when we deal with personal control. So the question of God's presence is the question of his control, and

of his character as manifested in that control. God is not identical with the physical laws of the universe. To conceive him as such would be to reduce his working to that of efficient causation, and thus to lose his personality. Rather, God is present in the universe in that the universe is his instrument and is carrying out his plan. He is present in no spatial sense. Yet the natural world if we could understand it, history if we could understand it, would tell us in all its parts of the divine plan, and would be the manifestation of the divine love. In no part of the world am I away from the immediate care and protection of our heavenly Father. "If I take the wings of the morning, and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." "Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without your Father. Ye are of more value than many sparrows." That is an infinitely higher concept than any that has been expressed in spatial terms. It sums up in the terms of a personal relation that which the awkward terms of transcendence and immanence have been trying to express.

Fourthly, let us go back to the two sonnets with which we began. Arnold's sonnet expressed the hard, impersonal concept of physical law. This side has been strikingly put by Mulford in "The Republic of God": "There is in nature no strain of sympathy that breaks its indifference, no love interrupts its inexorable course. No appeal can stay its falling rocks. No entreaty can restrain its beating waves. It has no power to help man in his calamity. It does not turn to avert his injury, nor to mitigate his pain. The clown says to the old man in the storm—

‘Here’s a night that pities
Neither wise men nor fools.’

It is only in a figurative way that there is any declaration of a moral quality in the physical process. It is simply without the moral." And all that is true. Mere physical laws go on their way without regard to man. Nature is hard and cruel. "Fool, if thou canst not pass her, rest her slave." That is the account of nature looked at from the point of view of efficient causes, of physical laws. And yet the thought of Gilder's sonnet is true also. Nature can be looked at also from the point of view of

final cause. For we believe that in and through nature is manifested that which does "pass her." Here is the presence of a personal power. It is not the stars that save us. And yet the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. We can cry out to the very stars, "Touch and baptize me with the mighty power that in ye thrills," for that mighty power is the power of the personal God.

And that brings me to the last suggestion that I have to make as to the general view I have been presenting, and that is as to its bearing on the sense of the beauty of nature, on the appreciation of and love for the beauty of the physical world. The sense of the beauty of nature is so ingrained in us, is so much a part of our present culture, that we tend to think of it as an original possession of man. We take it for granted that man must have always felt the subtle charm of sea and mountain and forest. But it is greatly to be doubted if this is the case. It is far more probable that to primitive man nature was an object of dread rather than of love. The love of nature in our modern sense is a rather late product, and arises only with a fairly well-developed civilization. The history of art seems to show that the appreciation of nature comes after the appreciation of personality, and is indeed the product of a personal interpretation. In painting, the representation of nature remained subsidiary to that of the human form until a comparatively late date. The love of nature arises in and through the appreciation of humanity. To put the matter in the form of a one-sided aphorism, the love of the country is the product of the city. That is, as men enter into civilizing relations with each other, those relations by which personality comes to self-consciousness, by that process is developed the love for and appreciation of nature. Nature must be reached through personality or its message is not received. To love nature and to despise persons is to forget the rock from which we were hewn, the pit from which we were digged. Wordsworth, the greatest of all poets of nature, was also equally the poet of human life.

Now all this has a bearing on our main thesis. I have tried to show that the concept of the supernatural lies in the personal interpretation of nature. Nature itself knows only efficient cause,

only physical forces. Yet we believe that there is above nature a personal will that uses nature as a means of expression. Does it not follow that the deepest sense of the beauty and charm of nature must always see in it the revelation of personality? It is not matter that gives us the "cleansing bath" of beauty. It is matter interpreted in terms of final cause, matter the vehicle of spiritual impulse. The deepest sense of the beauty of nature will go hand in hand with the ability to let nature reveal the supernatural. It will therefore follow that the highest appreciation of nature comes through personality. Where personality gets its rights, there will nature convey her deepest message. The Christian concept of the personal God is a sounder basis for the love of nature than is the pantheistic identity that loses the very key to nature's deeper interpretation. He understands, and therefore loves, nature best who sees in nature the instrument and revelation of creative love. He sees in nature that which is above nature, "the light that never was on sea or land, the consecration, and the poet's dream." He sees in nature all its hardness and all its brutality, but he sees more. And though the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together, he sees in all that groaning and travailing the working of a divine purpose, the birth-pangs of a new creation, the coming of the Son of Man, the preparation for the

"One far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves."

DUALISM OR DUALITY?

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I

Do we live in an intrinsically rent and warring world? or is the schism only apparent, veiling a fundamental and all-pervasive harmony? or is the universe of such a nature as to admit of a conflict which, though it has sprung up within it, is not of it?

These three possibilities offer themselves to the mind that is trying to push through the world of appearances into the world of reality. The first is the conclusion of Dualism. The second is the conclusion of Monism. The third is an undifferentiated, but long prevalent and well-grounded, conviction, sometimes wrongly identified with dualism, sometimes with monism, but in reality independent of both. For want of a better term we may call it the principle of Duality.¹

If we look for exemplifications of the three attitudes, we readily find them, emphatically expressed, if not always clearly framed. Of the first the classic example is Zoroastrianism, with its close-drawn battle between good and evil, in which all forces, cosmic and human, are arrayed against each other. Here is apparently pure dualism; yet the further we press backward in Zoroastrianism the stronger does the emphasis become upon goodness both at the beginning and end of the cosmic process.²

Nevertheless, Zoroastrianism as a whole is an intense and uncompromising dualism, primarily moral, but becoming metaphysical as well as moral. Less assertive than this personal dualism, but sharing its inherent dualistic attitude, are all forms of imper-

¹ This is not a case of a distinction without a difference, but of a distinction without a terminology. I assume that the term Duality avoids the sense of disruption and hostility implied in the ending "ism."

² See G. F. Moore, "Zoroastrianism," *Harvard Theological Review*, vol. v, especially pp. 224, 225.

sonal dualism, which sets matter, as in itself evil or base, over against spirit, as opposed to it. Such are Buddhism, Essenism, Gnosticism, Manichaeism, certain forms of Neoplatonism, together with all the vagrant fanaticisms which despise the material life.

The second attitude, the interpretation of all existence as one, of spirit as only a form of nature, or nature as a form of spirit, is that of all thorough-going pantheisms and monisms, including Brahmanism, Spinozism, Hegelianism, absolute idealism in all its forms, cosmism, and physical monism. These may vary in character from the rapt intellectualism of Spinoza to the bald naturalism of Ostwald, but they agree in obliterating any fundamental difference between matter and mind, the natural and the spiritual, good and evil.

The third attitude consists in the recognition of two distinct and uninterchangeable but complementary forms of reality, conceived now as mind and matter, now as spirit and nature, the one active, the other passive,³ through whose right relation to one another, on the one hand, moral good is promoted, and through whose misrelationship, on the other hand, moral evil arises. Lying between the extremes of monism on the one side and dualism on the other, or perhaps beyond them both as their solvent and corrective, this theory of duality has had far more of influence and demands more of recognition than has been accorded to it.

The father and founder of this dual conception of the universe was Plato. Although Plato is universally called a dualist, strictly speaking the term is a misnomer. There is abundant material in the Dialogues to prove how far he was from dualism proper, both in its militant and its emanationistic forms. The non-dualistic attitude of Plato, as expressed in the *Timaeus*, for example, is evident in at least three particulars. First, he held a firm conception of the goodness of the world as a whole. "Why did the creator make the world? He was good and therefore not jealous, and being free from jealousy he desired that all things

³ Dualism proper regards the second principle as well as the first as active. The Stoics, like Plato, regarded matter as passive. "Das wahre Charaktermerkmal der $\epsilon\lambda\eta$ ist Passivität." Aal, Geschichte der Logosidee, p. 113.

should be as like himself as they could be.”⁴ Secondly, Plato provides no place either for an Angra-Mainyu or a demiurge. In the *Timaeus* he represents God as employing assisting gods in creating, but these, too, are God’s own creation.⁵ His only demiurge is Reason (Νοῦς). His universe is a rational universe, built upon the pattern of the eternal Ideas. Thirdly, Plato represents matter, or necessity, not as a hostile or evil principle but as the passive receptacle of the Ideas, and thus essential to creation. It is spoken of as “reluctant,” but yielding finally to the persuasions of reason.⁶ For the union of forms with the formless is needed to make a world. Whatever the connection between Platonism and Christianity, a duality not unlike this is the actual attitude toward the world which from the first Christianity adopted and maintained.⁷

II

Paul, the first and foremost representative interpreter of Christianity, defined the Christian attitude on this subject clearly and concisely in his well-known distinction between the natural and the spiritual man.⁸ There is no dualism here, simply duality. But it is a duality that is positive and significant. It contains in germ the entire attitude of Christianity toward life, theoretical and practical. For, as the apostle goes on to demonstrate, while there is no antagonism between nature and spirit, still the one is first and the other second, the one lower and the other higher. “Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural.” In other words there is a difference in value, as well as in kind, between the natural and the spiritual. And in that difference lies the whole possibility and power of the new life—regeneration, self-development, resurrection. Here, too, lies the

⁴ Plato, *Timaeus*, 30.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁷ For a discussion of the dependence upon Plato of the Christian fathers in the Hexaemeron see an article by Frank E. Robbins on “The Influence of Greek Philosophy in the Early Commentaries on Genesis,” in the *American Journal of Theology*, April, 1912.

⁸ 1 Cor. 15 44–49; also 1 Cor. 2 14.

possibility of that fatal schism between the inward man and the fleshly man (into whose members the law of sin has entered) described by the apostle in the seventh chapter of Romans. It is only as this dual constitution of the cosmos and of human nature enters into experience that the laws, the achievements, the hopes, of the Christian life are real and realizable.

Repeated attempts have been made to resolve Paul's duality into a metaphysical dualism. He does indeed (Gal. 5 17) make flesh and spirit hostile to one another, but never body and spirit. His "sins of the flesh" have been again and again misinterpreted as though they were sins arising from the flesh, instead of being, as he himself plainly indicates, sins connected with the flesh but arising from another source. In his enumeration of the works of the flesh, ten out of fifteen of those designated are mental rather than physical.⁹ His words concerning marriage have been misconstrued as dualistic. It is true that Paul expressed his preference for celibacy. But his advice against marriage is almost entirely upon grounds of expediency, and he distinctly pronounces marriage to be of divine appointment.¹⁰ Indeed, while he recognized the duality of nature and spirit, his whole attitude toward life and conduct is free, broad, and wholesome, based upon the principle that "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof."¹¹

In this attitude there is every reason to believe that Paul had "the mind of Christ." He who was constantly throwing into antithesis the soul and the body, the earthly world and the heavenly, and who was the prince of the way of the cross, yet renounced the asceticism of John the Baptist and was called a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber. With this temper and spirit in its founder, communicating itself vitally to his followers, it would have been a complete subversion of the mind of its Lord for Christianity either to confound sense and spirit or to fall into a narrow and repressive asceticism.

The Christian church, though often crossing the border-line

⁹ Gal. 5 17-21.

¹⁰ 1 Cor. 11 12.

¹¹ "There is no reason why Paul should not have been familiar with dualism as it existed in Hellenic thought; but that he embraced it or held it is a supposition obviously incompatible with the general tenour of his teaching." F. R. Tennant, *The Fall and Original Sin*, p. 269.

of dualism, on the whole avoided it. Victoriously lifting the spiritual above the material, insisting upon conversion from sin and a new birth into the spirit, inculcating self-denial and self-sacrifice, yet convinced that this is God's world from dust to star, thrusting away Gnosticism, Nicolaitanism, Manichaeism, Christianity remained for the most part clear-sighted and firm in sustaining a sane and balanced attitude toward life, exalting the world of the spirit, yet never cursing the world of sense. And for this steadfast spiritual sanity of the early church Paul, interpreting as he did the mind of Christ, was largely responsible.

The Johannine outlook upon the world is in essential agreement with that of Paul. The conception of the Logos which is the key to the Fourth Gospel involves duality and excludes metaphysical dualism. The fundamental distinction between reason and nature, form and matter, requires at once their differentiation from, and their adaptation to, each other. Creative activity on the part of reason, inherent receptivity on the part of matter—this is the heart of the doctrine of the Logos from Heraclitus through the Stoics and Philo to the present time. It is true that Neoplatonism developed a tendency, latent in Plato, to regard matter as essentially alien to reason, thus suggesting the agency of the Logos as that of intermediary between the two, but this is not the true and original conception of the Logos.¹² The divine Reason traverses no abyss of separation, according to true idealism, to reach its constructive material. It is its own creative expression. The author of the Fourth Gospel gives every indication of holding the true and not the debased conception of the Logos. The Word is from the beginning not only with God (*πρὸς τὸν θεόν*) but *of* God (*θεός*). All things are made through (*διὰ*) him. To crown all, he became flesh. The assertion is not that he assumed flesh but that he became flesh. This is essentially Philo's conception, except that this last intrepid assertion of incarnation completely transcends his purview. Philo's description of creation, far from assuming, as is commonly claimed, an original intractable and base matter, is true to the optimism of Genesis. For instance, in describing the first man he writes:

¹² It is to this prevalent but unjust notion of the doctrine of the Logos that its present disrepute is largely due.

And one may form a conjecture of the perfection of his bodily beauty from three considerations, the first of which is this: When the earth was now but lately formed by its separation from that abundant quantity of water called the sea, it happened that the materials out of which the things just created were formed were unmixed, uncorrupted, and pure; and the things made from this material were naturally free from all imperfection.¹³

Nature fresh and unsullied is not base but good. The spiritual seer who wrote the Fourth Gospel seems to have looked upon the nature of the world and of man in the same manner, as originally and of itself pure and good, a Logos-world, a Logos-lighted man. "Without him was not anything made that was made." It is only by virtue of an alien factor entering through a wilful desecration that the whole world order has become disturbed. When our author writes of the light shining in darkness and the darkness apprehending it not, it is of the self-produced darkness of the mind that he speaks. Out of this natural order, not because it is evil, but because it is unspiritual, one must be born anew. This involves a forsaking, not of the natural world itself, but of the sin that has come to darken it. In brief, in the Fourth Gospel, as in Paul, we find ourselves in the atmosphere of ontological duality and moral dualism. This attitude, thus early assumed, continued to characterize Christian theology.

III

Almost at the outset Christianity was exposed to the severest temptation to abandon this sane and simple duality for a profound and searching system of dualism, namely, Gnosticism. The full tide of this subtle and influential dualistic philosophy swept in upon Christianity, but left her unmoved. In gathering all her strength and summoning all her resources to resist Gnosticism, Christianity showed how thoroughly she was committed to a trustful and undivisive view of the world. She would neither yield nor compromise. In the *agape* and the *fides apostolica* are embodied the protest of the church against orientalism. Severe

¹³ De Opificio Mundi, § 47.

as the early church often was in her attitude toward the world, encouraging renunciation and self-denial, on the whole in her great battle with both Gnosticism and Docetism she stood firm for a good, undivisive universe.¹⁴

After this victory Christian theology enjoyed a period of inner serenity and freedom in which Platonism was thoroughly assimilated and christianized. The greatest of the apologists were Christian Platonists, and both they and the great Alexandrians, Clement and Origen, who followed them, maintained the Christian-Platonic dual conception of the universe, the key to which is the Logos incarnated in Jesus Christ. Athanasianism, too, turning, as it did, more directly to the problem of humanity, found the antinomy of flesh and spirit resolved in the divine-human Son of God.

Latin theology drifted toward metaphysical dualism, but stopped short of it, held back by the very genius and spirit of Christianity. Augustine's Neoplatonism led him at times to an immoderate disparagement of the world of sensation and a sombre overestimate of the welter of corruption in which humanity is sunk. And yet when he formulates, with deeper thoroughness of reflection, his theory of evil, he rests upon the principle *omne esse bonum est*, and makes the essence of evil to be negation.

The great ontological controversy of the Middle Ages, that between realism and nominalism, turned largely upon this same issue of redefining the relation of the eternal to the material, of the One to the many. Although Plato had made a place for both unity and diversity, he had thrown the balance of his emphasis so strongly upon the eternal and universal as to leave the material and individual in unjust subordination. Aristotle's correction of this maladjustment—which, however, threw the balance too heavily on the other side—did not find its way into theology until the mediaeval period. The great controversy of realism and nominalism was the result. Is the one reality that of universals? or is the chief reality that of individuals? With more of

¹⁴ "From the end of the second century it was for ever established in the church that the belief in an essential dualism of God and the world, spirit and nature, was irreconcilable with Christianity." Harnack, *Monasticism*, p. 23.

intuitive wisdom than of adherence to professional argumentative triumphs, mediaeval theology refused to accept either alternative, and held fast to a duality of reals, thus adding another testimony to the invincible duality of existence which from the first Christianity espoused. The distinction of a kingdom of nature and a kingdom of grace is another recognition of the fundamentally dual character of existence.

The Roman church, however, gradually yielded to a dualism stronger and more subtle than that of speculation—the ancient, obstinate dualism of superstition. Inconsistently, fatally, the church incorporated not only into its practice but into its theology the conception of a world alien to God, inhabited not only by corrupt men but by evil spirits, a world whose only hope lay in mediation and miracle, culminating in that incomparable concession to dualism, the perpetual miracle of the Mass. For, while the Mass is capable of interpretation in terms of the receptivity of the material elements to the divine spirit, as a matter of fact its remarkable hold has been due in large part to the assumed miracle of transformation by which that which in itself is common and undivine is made over by a wonder-working priesthood into the very body of Christ.

With the Reformation the bondage of this superstitious dualism was broken; and yet its fetters were not wholly cast aside. Luther, with a noble and enlightened faith, taught the wholesomeness of life, the sacredness of the family and of common toil; but side by side with this liberality he retained too strong a sense of the overshadowing power of a personal devil intrenched in the world itself. Calvin, with all his insistence upon a sovereignty of God that penetrated to every nook and corner of the earth and controlled every minutest act and event, managed to produce the effect of a practical metaphysical dualism, sadly distorting the joyousness of Christianity, wrapping its limbs in sackcloth and hampering its freedom with unnatural restrictions.

Yet on the whole Protestantism, while keenly alive, doctrinally and practically, to the moral dualism which has sprung up in the world, has never yielded to metaphysical dualism. It has thrown into the sharpest juxtaposition the goodness of creation

and the badness of man in abusing it. Still, its duality must be admitted to have been in the main an exaggerated and separative one, in which the immanence of the spiritual in the natural which characterized original Christianity and Greek theology has been almost wholly lost. Eighteenth-century rationalism represents the height of this hard, clear, cold separation of the two worlds. The arid poverty and frigid conventionality of this period prepared the way for the inrush of that tide of romanticism, pantheism, and orientalism which has carried us so far toward monistic and hedonistic attitudes.

Clearly and forcibly the truth has come home to our age that a hard-and-fast duality, which keeps the two realms of existence alien and apart, comes too near to a dualism that sets them against each other in implacable strife and hostility. Either monism or a duality of immanence in which the eternal finds its expression and embodiment in the natural—to one of these conclusions we seem to be moving. As to which of the two is the Christian attitude, there can be no doubt.

But has not Christianity, from the very first, and throughout its career to the present day, thrown into high relief the might and mystery of evil? Has it not spoken in tones of dread and warning of Satan and his angels, of principalities and powers, of wickedness in high places,¹⁵ as well as of besetting sins and thronging temptations? Yes; but always it has attributed this disruption and conflict to self-corrupted and rebellious wills. It has never made a place for it in the nature and design of Being itself. Its cosmology has been duality; its ethics, dualism. The struggle of the spirit is not so much a struggle with nature or matter as a struggle to be true to itself.

Into the remoter reaches of the problem why spirit should contain within itself the possibility of denying itself and subverting nature to unholy ends, Christian theology has never successfully entered. It has in the main been content to refer it to the root principle of freedom, which belongs to the very

¹⁵ Paul, who (together with the Johannine author) is as largely responsible for this conception of the superhuman character of evil as he is for the non-dualistic sanity of the Christian attitude toward life, seems to have intended by these vigorous terms to emphasize the power of evil rather than to define it metaphysically.

essence of spirit, a principle which requires the possibility of evil but not at all its actuality. Thus Christian theology tends to leave the origin of moral evil in that unexplored realm in which the finite will works out its adjustment to the Infinite Will.

IV

Turning now to a brief survey of modern philosophy with reference to the distinction before us, we find that, as a matter of fact, practically all systems of modern thought have adopted in some form, as a working principle, the distinction between matter and mind. Spinoza himself, at the fountain-head of modern thought, did so. Descartes set the two in such sharp contrast as to win for the initial type of modern philosophy the title of dualism.¹⁶ But Cartesianism was not dualism in the proper sense, for it involved no necessary opposition between matter and mind, but simply their contrast. Descartes's description of the two has undergone radical reconstruction, yet the effort to resolve them into one seems as far from realization as ever. Static and mechanical as was Descartes's treatment of matter, his metaphysic was dual rather than dualistic.

Leibniz reduced matter to immateriality, but kept the distinction between body and soul by dividing his monads into ruling monads and subordinate monads. Here again is duality—though in a very attenuated form—without dualism. Still more tenuous is Berkeley's duality. Matter is but the sign-language of spirit. There are only minds and their ideas. But, even with material objects reduced to ideas, the inevitable distinction remains. There is something standing over against the mind, clothed in tangible and visible form—namely, its ideas. The fact that they can be used as food and clothing differentiates them from pure spirit.

With Kant the full recognition of ethical dualism comes into philosophy for the first time in its full strength, to interpret and accentuate metaphysical duality. Through Kant's insight that

¹⁶ Thus Martineau says: "With Descartes we enter upon the true era of metaphysical dualism." *Types of Ethical Theory*, i, 126.

the real source of true knowledge, as of true action, is the moral reason, philosophy entered into a new understanding of personality. Personalism thus found its true basis and setting only in Kant. He first saw, in their united meaning, the three principles of the necessity of an external world of some sort for the mind to reconstruct, the regulative action of the mind upon that world, and the supremacy of the moral reason over every other function of the mind. His unknowable *Ding an sich* was doubtless an awkward factor in his system, but it stood for his fundamental conviction of the duality of existence, so essential to ethics and to theology, and not even Fichte's searching criticism could make him disown it.

It is true, however, that Kant's duality was not only ill-adjusted but overdrawn. Both its rationalistic and agnostic elements produced extremes. The former led to the rationalistic idealism and ultimate monism of Hegelianism, the latter to the agnosticism and ultimate scepticism of Hamilton, Mansel, and Spencer. Since the disintegration of absolutism and of agnosticism, philosophy, aside from its lapse into the philosophy of the unconscious in Germany and its adventure into the *cul de sac* of pragmatism in America, has been moving toward personal idealism, in which duality is interpreted in the light of social personality. The essential realities are persons. The external world exists, but only as the material for the development and communication of personalities. Eucken in Germany, Rashdall in England, and Howison in America, as representatives of this newer personal-social idealism, are doing much to steer us safely between the Scylla of monism and the Charybdis of pragmatism. Eucken's philosophy is notably clear in its recognition of the fact and significance of duality.¹⁷

Contrasted with this idealistic duality is that of Bergson, reached by the scientific-philosophical approach, yet equally positive in its assertion of the twofold nature of existence—matter and life—and in its rejection of metaphysical dualism. Bergson-

¹⁷There can be no action, says Eucken, without this duality—keine Tat ohne Zweiheit—and the duality itself is indigenous to the action; it is both grounded within and overcome within it. Boyce Gibson, *Rudolf Eucken's Philosophy of Life*, p. 96.

ian matter, to be sure, though a "flux rather than a thing,"¹⁸ is relatively inert and irresponsive, and thus far like that of Plato and Plotinus, but never hostile or evil. It might seem that a flowing philosophy, such as that of Bergson, which recognizes nothing as static or determined, would be monistic, like the energetics of Ostwald; but such is not the case. His whole metaphysic is constructed upon the interaction of two opposite, yet not opposing, movements, matter on the one hand, life or consciousness on the other. "Matter, the reality which *descends*, endures only by its connection with that which *ascends*. But life and consciousness are this very ascension."¹⁹ This conception of matter gives it a distinct reality, and yet it only plays the part of foil, or rather protagonist, to consciousness. It is "a relaxation of the inextensive into the extensive."²⁰ As such it stimulates consciousness to activity. "Above all, matter is what provokes effort and renders it possible."²¹ One of the most definitive as well as far-reaching statements which Professor Bergson has made appears in the same article from which the above sentence is quoted. It is to this effect: And I believe also that neither the matter constituting a world nor the consciousness which utilizes this matter can be explained by themselves, and that there is a common source of both this matter and this consciousness.²²

Here is both duality and also a strong suggestion of super-origin. Nevertheless, Bergson's duality, valuable as it is for both science and metaphysics, is tentative and incomplete. It fails to find the ultimate line of cleavage. The duality which is of chief concern for humanity is not that of life and matter, but that of nature and spirit. The personal and the physical—these are the two realms which together constitute the universe, the relations of which to each other form our imperative problem. Bergson's duality points toward this deeper duality, throws light upon it, but does not reach it.

Before going on to comment, in conclusion, upon the value of this conception of the dual nature of existence, we should pause

¹⁸ Creative Evolution, p. 186.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 369.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 218.

²¹ "Life and Consciousness," Hibbert Journal, October, 1911, p. 41.

²² Ibid., p. 87.

to note an objection. It has doubtless occurred to the reader that in this study there has been a confounding of different kinds of dualities. That recognized by Christianity is not the same as that of philosophy, and science has its own form of duality, differing from both. And yet, though the lines shift and change, these are seen to be after all but aspects of one fundamental duality, that of the two realms—the realm of nature and the realm of ends.²³

V

In many ways the principle of duality throws light upon the problems both of nature and of man. A dual universe, for example, is the only one in which development and freedom are possible. Good as the universe is in origin and in essence, it is not as yet the best possible world, in the Leibnizian sense, since it has not reached its own best. It is not static, finished, but on the way. The best thing in it is that it is bettering, advancing, developing. Now the possibility of progress implies diversity of structure. A world strictly and absolutely homogeneous would be either a dead world or a perfect world. The world of the absolutist cannot truly develop. There is for it no higher and lower. The Hegelian process of development is only an unfolding, a coming to consciousness of the Perfect One, a passing from implicitness to explicitness. Nor can the world of naturalism develop, because it has nothing to develop toward. It can evolve, pass through cycles, as Spencer held, but true development is alien to the very idea of naturalism. Only a world in which there is a higher and a lower can develop. Development involves at least a duality of higher and lower.

A being of a dual nature, like man, must inevitably be confronted by the task of adjusting the one nature to the other. In proportion as he fails to keep the rational in control of the sensuous, he sins. The entire use of the senses and of the material world must be governed by spiritual laws, that is, by one's relation to other persons. Temptation comes, not through any sensuous appetite

²³ James Ward has strikingly set forth the contrast of these two realms in the first two chapters of his recent volume, *The Realm of Ends*.

in itself, but in yielding to it in contravention of personal obligations.

It is further evident that freedom is the essential condition of this process of adjustment, and that freedom carries with it the inevitable possibility of maladjustment. That this freedom is strictly confined to man alone is not so certain as it once seemed, now that Bergson and others have unfolded the realm of evolutionary choices and thus of a certain kind of nascent freedom in nature below man. In man, however, is the exercise of true freedom. In ourselves we are aware of nothing more real than the interplay of the dual part of our nature—the tug of our lower nature, which yet is not low, and the power of assertion and control of reason. Often this interplay rises into a strife, a “warfare” as Paul calls it, in which the natural man and the spiritual man make havoc of our peace of mind. And yet the enmity is not essential and inherent, for sometimes the two fall into such accord and harmony that life flows into a hymn of joy in which no jarring note is felt. Has not Browning the right of it when he sings:

Let us not always say,
 “Spite of this flesh today
 I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!”
 As the bird wings and sings,
 Let us cry, “All good things
 Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul!”

All nature-mysticism is built upon this deep accord of the outer and the inner, soul and sense, word and reason, beauty and truth,—an accord which has been disturbed but not broken. In our moments of finer insight, as in listening to music, we feel the harmony underlying all the discord of our life.

Clearly, then, the schism lies in a disturbance and not in an inherent disharmony of the two elements of our being. “The world is of the right stuff, but of wrong arrangement.”²⁴ The duality is as capable of harmony as of strife. It has become a dualism only through the corrupting act of will. Clearly, too, the dualism is not confined to the individual will simply, but is

²⁴ G. M. Stratton, *The Psychology of the Religious Life*, p. 355.

a social as well as an individual schism. Whether this dissension is confined to human wills or embraces a wider circle, including mightier spirits, is a matter of conjecture only. It does not affect the principle; namely, that moral dualism is due to defective will and is not original and essential.

VI

It is not easy to realize the full significance and value of this uno-dual *Weltanschauung*, with the attitude of mingled confidence and watchfulness that it begets. It presents to us a world consisting of two mutually fulfilling forms of existence, which we call matter and mind, or sense and spirit, the one formative, the other receptive; the one non-spatial, the other spatial; the one subjective, the other objective; the one purposive, the other non-purposive. It is not a divided world, for these two forms of existence are neither hostile nor unrelated; indeed Christianity assigns them to a single Creative Source. It is, in fact, a consistent world, a *good* world. It is a good world in virtue of the fact that reason is dominant in it. There is in it no inherent conflict of light and darkness, no battle of gods and giants, heat and cold, Yang and Yin, no perpetual strife of angels and demons. And yet there is a real battle—*within the human soul*.

In the recognition of this schism which has entered into the world through human sin it is undoubtedly true that there has been a strong tendency on the part of those who hold the dual attitude to carry the disruption back toward the very centre and source of things and thus approach the dualistic attitude. For this reason they often appear to be thorough-going dualists. This is the case, in some degree, with Plato, with Paul, with Philo, with Plotinus, with Origen, notably so with Augustine; and from Augustine the tendency communicated itself to Protestantism. Disparagement of the body, asceticism, hostility to art and to culture, other-worldliness, have been the unhappy results. But this exaggerated duality, which has carried it, at times, to the very verge of dualism, has been in the interest of the life of the spirit in the ardent endeavor to throw the emphasis where it

rightly belongs. In the attempt to adjudicate values the adjustment of values has suffered. Yet, after all, this is a pardonable error, however disastrous, since committed in behalf of the higher life, the greater value.

Present-day thought and life, in its swing toward monism and hedonism, its overvaluation of material good, and its loss of the mystical element in religion, is in need of a restored recognition of the distinction between spirit and nature and of the inherent supremacy of spirit. It is only thus that life can be made normal, and humanity move toward the goal of the personal and social ideal. Unless the eternal transcendence of spirit over nature is kept in view, nature is certain to absorb and suppress all sense of the spirit. Unless, on the other hand, the immanence of spirit in nature is recognized, nature can never fulfil her highest uses and noblest ends. We have advanced from the separative duality of Plato and of the repressive type of Christian theology to the conception of a duality of immanence which is the heart of Christianity. Is it to be lost in a resurgence of monism or of naturalism?

There is no reason whatever why we should be forced into the alternative, monism or dualism. It is a factitious dilemma. There has always been a third point of view, more prevalent, more fundamental, more vital than either of these, obscured by its superficial resemblance to metaphysical dualism, yet now, through the light shed upon it by personalism, growing constantly clearer and more emancipating. Inconsistent with monism and with dualism, it is yet entirely consistent with a Unity that grounds in Theism and a Pluralism that centres in Personalism.

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE THE KEY TO CHRISTIAN HISTORY

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No field of theological study surpasses in interest or in importance the history of the Christian Church. Here is a great complex of institutions and beliefs. Where have these come from? What was it that gave them birth? What is the secret of their persistence and power? What are they worth to mankind? Is there to be found beneath the variant, shifting forms of institution and life, of organization and creed, as they appear in Christian history, any underlying, unifying principle, which can account for their rise and explain their right to be? These questions must be answered. They involve the fundamental problems of the unity of Christian history and of the rationality and worth of institutions and confessions and rituals, which, unless they can thus justify themselves, cannot permanently survive.

It is the purpose of this article to show that there is such a unifying principle of interpretation, and that this principle is to be found in the reality of the Christian experience itself. Behind every movement in the history of the church, behind every institution which she has developed for the expression and perpetuation of her life, behind every doctrine and creed, there stands a human soul which has met God, and in the great silence, unbroken save by the cry of penitence or the exultant note of spiritual conquest, has found the path to peace.

The infinite variety of human life, the varying capacity of mind and heart, must of necessity lead to widely different types, both of religious experience and of its intellectual interpretation. The mystic will be found there, for whom the path of contemplation is the highway to God. The man of action will be there, to whom intercourse with the Infinite is the imperative to service and to the propagation of the faith. The genius of organization will be seen there, intent on incarnating experience in institutions

interpreting and perpetuating the emotions of the heart. Great thinkers will be numbered there, moulding into doctrines and systems of belief their own experiences and those of other men. All these and many other types of heart and mind will bring their offerings of intellectual discernment, or moral enthusiasm, or spiritual appreciation, and lay them upon the altar of the church of God.

Nor will we ever be satisfied with the consideration of these fruits of the Christian experience alone. The ecclesiastical institution, the activities which grow out of the Christian consciousness, the intellectual formulation of the Christian experience in dogmas, or systems of belief—these are in no sense adequate to express the primal experience which gave them birth. Between that experience as their source and the institution, or movement, or belief, which would interpret it, the stream has been polluted by many foreign elements and its course diverted by many a promontory of human interest, until it is hard to realize that behind the tortuous current, with its muddy waters, there ever was a clear spring of Christian experience, born of a soul's contact with God.

If we would ever come to understand the movements of Christian history, we must work our way back through forms and rituals to men, to the heart-throbs of human souls. Only so will the artificial and formal, the irrational, the grotesque, be shot through and through with meaning, as the inadequate interpretation of an experience of God which was itself both adequate and supremely significant. We must have a care never to confuse the interpretation of life with life itself. One is formal and intellectual, the other is vital and spiritual. One is created, the other is creative.

With this summary assertion of the primacy of the Christian experience in the history of the church, let us pass to the consideration of a few illustrations of this truth, drawn from the wide range of spiritual biography. And in the first place let us remind ourselves that the Christian religion began, not as an institution, nor as a ritual, nor as a doctrine or creed, but as an experience, a life, an inspiration. Jesus established no church, organized no system of worship, developed no institution, taught

no essentially new doctrine, wrote no gospel, left behind no constitution or system of laws. The uniqueness and everlasting worth of Jesus for our world rests, and must forever rest, in the fact that he met God face to face in the high, clear altitudes of an unclouded fellowship. His worth for humanity lies deep in his personal experience. "I know Him," he said again and again. The streams of beneficence that flowed from his lips and his life validate the claim. Christianity thus has its roots in the primal experience of Jesus' own soul. As has well been said, "The religious consciousness of Christ is the Holy Place from which gushes forth a living spring to water all future generations." He called other men to share in his consciousness, to drink at his fountain. He called others to him to introduce them to the Father. He did not undertake to institutionalize or intellectualize that experience. That he left to others. Rather did he seek to bring to his followers an experience kindred to his own, that there might be wrought in them the same type of spirit. He was not concerned, if only that were present, about the forms it might assume, or the instruments it would employ for its preservation and propagation in the world.

If we turn now from Jesus himself to those who have been influenced by Jesus, we shall be impressed anew to find, upon every page of Christian history, in the lives of the great, who have left the indelible impress of their personalities upon its manifold developments, or of the humble, who have contributed their littles to the sum-total of Christian achievement, that the basic and formative fact in the lives of all was that they had come to know God. Where shall we find, in the history of the church, three names which in the totality of their genius, the wealth of their creative power, the sweep of their influence, the manifold character of their contributions to Christian life and thought, are comparable to Paul, Augustine, and Luther? These three towering personalities stand, each at the entrance of one of the three great epochs of Christian history, the Ancient, Mediaeval, and Modern, determining in large measure the movements of the succeeding centuries, the intellectual and spiritual problems of those centuries, and the direction, and, to some extent, the form of their solution. It is fair to ask, in view of these facts, Wherein

lies their chief value for the church? Does it lie primarily in the movements to which they gave birth, the institutions which grew out of their thought, the creeds which expressed their religious philosophy, or rather in the creative religious experience which was common to them all?

Paul stands in the front rank of Christian thinkers by his insight into those fundamental problems centering in the revelation of God in Christ that stirred the heart and engaged the mind of the church for centuries, until they were wrought out with hammer and anvil in the early creeds, which, whatever worth they may have for the church today, are an everlasting protest against slipshod, superficial thinking upon the central verities of faith. Whatever it was that Christ meant to Paul, whatever of new insight and content was given to his thought of God, what theories he built to account for the person and work of Jesus, what programme he evolved for the development of the church militant and the consummation of the church triumphant, all these facts and teachings, vastly important as they are, are not to be compared in importance with the fact that, on his way to persecute the church in Damascus, Saul of Tarsus met Jesus of Nazareth and surrendered to his sovereignty. "Christ liveth in me"—that was henceforth the overmastering consciousness of the apostle. Out of it came the answer to every doubt and difficulty, both intellectual and spiritual. Upon that rock was built the temple of his faith and the fortress of his belief. With the profound conviction, "I know Him whom I have believed," he went forth to evangelize the world and to establish the church. McGiffert is right when he says, "We can neither understand Paul the Christian nor Paul the theologian, unless we appreciate that experience and give it its true value. It marks him as one of the great religious geniuses of history."

What is true of Paul is equally true of his spiritual disciple. Augustine stands at the threshold of the Middle Ages. Their spirit is his. Their institutions are the legitimate offspring of his mind and heart. Monasticism, mysticism, scholasticism, papacy! To name these mighty movements, which gripped the life and moulded the institutions of the church through a period of a thousand years, is, in a large degree, to take the measure of

this man, who projects his personality across the Christian centuries. Unquestionably he gave direction to the ideals and furnished the mould for the shaping of the institutions of that complex age. His writings are the quarries from which master workmen shaped the stones they built into the structure of mediaeval thought. Upon his *City of God* the papacy built its claims to world-sovereignty. The subtlety of his genius and the dialectic quality of his mind paved the way for scholasticism. He was a monk and a mystic combined, and contributed to the growth of both monasticism and mysticism. As a theologian he wrestled with some of the knottiest and most unyielding problems of Christian thought, determining the form of trinitarian teaching in the west, by his emphasis on sin and grace opening a new chapter in Christian thinking and paving the way for the religious awakening of the sixteenth century. Upon the roll of the great, who, from the close of the Apostolic Age to the present, have devoted their intellectual acumen to the interpretation of Christianity, the name of Augustine stands first, the master mind of the centuries, belonging to no one age or church, though claimed by both Catholic and Protestant—a teacher of the church universal.

Yet when we have done full homage to the intellectual and moral power that have shaped the thought of Western Christianity, we must not forget how much of that which he wrought, and of what was wrought out of him, has been outgrown, as the church of these later days has built for herself more stately and enduring institutions and beliefs. The papacy has been rejected as an institution by a considerable portion of the Christian world. The gate of the monastery has swung outward, ever since the monk of Wittenberg reopened the path for religion, out into the world of life and work. Scholasticism has given way to modern science and modern philosophy. Even the central teachings of Augustine, persistent and fruitful as they have been in the theology of the church, have experienced inevitable modifications with the progress of Christian thought.

Wherein, then, in view of the diminishing value which these later centuries have put on the greatest achievements of his genius, lies the supreme worth of this saint and theologian of the fifth century for us today? There can be but one answer. The

ultimate fact out of which all else came, and back to which all else must go, to be judged for its worth, was Augustine's personal religious experience. Not so much in his *City of God* or in his controversial writings directed against Donatists and Pelagians, not so much in his constructive theological works, *On the Trinity* and the *Enchiridion*, as in his *Confessions*, in the early centuries the finest fruitage of a deep and vital spiritual life, must be sought the secret of his charm and the power of his influence over the heart of the church. His greatness as well as his limitations as a thinker are to be traced to the fact that he walked in the footsteps of philosophers and theologians. His greatness as a man and as a Christian is to be traced to the fact that he met God and walked with him.

To understand this, we must turn from the arena of hot debate, from sound of hammer, where theological doctrines are in process of construction, to the drama of the man's inner life. Somewhere in the experience of every great soul there is a garden of Gethsemane, where the victory over self is won. Augustine's Gethsemane was a garden in the city of Milan, where the battle was fought with passions which had enfeebled his will and made him a yielding, though rebellious, slave. Within the corridors of his soul two spirits grappled in a death embrace, the spirit of the man and of the beast. There is the mighty conflict, the prayer for help, the divine command, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," the response of obedience. Augustine leaves his garden to fight his battle through to ultimate victory. No one will question, who has fathomed the deeps of his life, that that day of conflict gave direction and motive power to all his later activities. The marks of that battle he carried to his death. It was the point of departure and the creative inspiration in his thought. It determined his theology. It made of him a mystic and a monk. In all his writings there is constant appeal to this primal experience.

Nor can we say less than this of Luther, as he stands at the portal of the modern age, gathering up into himself the protests of many minds against the corruptions of the papacy. In him there meet and mingle the hopes and aspirations of multitudes who long to slake their thirst at the springs of pure religion, un-

defiled by the contaminations of priestcraft and the corruptions of false doctrine, the heritage of the Middle Ages. He sounds the bugle-call which stirs consciences and crystallizes thought. The Reformation is born. A new church comes into being, its ritual and laws, its organization and doctrine, echoing the mind and heart of him who gave the movement birth. Look at its polity, and you find the indelible impress of Luther's mind. Examine its Confessions of Faith, and you discover the formal organization of Luther's great ideas. Consider its spirit, and you look into the mirror of Luther's own soul, with its religious fervor and its inherited conservatism. The past few months have produced two notable lives of the great reformer, which have added materially to our knowledge of the man and of the spirit that was in him. Like every truly great soul, the personality of Luther only grows the greater with the flight of the years. We see his faults and note his limitations. He says things that grate upon the finer sensibilities of an age which without him had not been. Sometimes he battles for beliefs which the church has since refused to accept as adequate to her faith. He did all this, and more. Yet when all has been said that can be said, the figure of Luther assumes ever more heroic proportions as we see him across the years. To have shaken the throne of the papacy, broken the bondage of mediaeval institutions and doctrines, and opened the flood-gates of new intellectual and spiritual life; to have created a new church, and given her the weapons of offence and defence; to have sent forth wave after wave of influence to break in light upon western Europe—these mark him as one of the creative geniuses of history.

We ask for the source of that power which went forth from him into the world of thought and action. He wrote many books, stirring the conscience and informing the mind of Germany. Yet the secret of his power was not in his pen. He taught throngs of students, who became ardent disciples and propagators of his message. But his strength did not lie primarily in academic halls. He was the friend and confidant of princes; kings sought his favor and counsel. Yet his greatness was not that of the statesman and politician. Behind all these gifts of his many-sided genius; behind his varied powers, as teacher, preacher, author,

statesman, counsellor, behind all these, and as the inspiration of them all, without which they had never become effective forces for the achievement of his life's great task, lies one, fundamental, never-to-be-forgotten fact. Luther had met God, and that meeting transformed the monk in the Augustinian cloister in Wittenberg into the herald of the Protestant Reformation. Within his own bosom, as has well been said, "we discover the shaping of the whole movement with which his name is associated in history. . . . Its deepest and most intrinsic elements, indeed the very order of its development," we find "rehearsed in the workings of this man's soul, in the quiet of Erfurt and Wittenberg, before he had thought of breaking with the church, or had dreamed of inaugurating a spiritual revolution." Indeed, the Reformation in Germany was the spiritual biography of Luther writ large, a spiritual experience materialized in institutions and intellectualized in confessions.

We follow the evolution of his soul, from the time he leaves the quiet home in Eisleben till he becomes the observed of all observers in Europe. And the thing that most impresses us is this, that within the heart of this man, in the great silence, is being wrought out the problem of the relation of a human soul to God. There is a growing consciousness of God's holiness, so high as never to be scaled by the ladders of institutional religion; a sense of sin so deep as to be unfathomed by the plummet of any human excellence; a consciousness of alienation so wide as to be unspanned by any bridge built by the soul's noblest efforts. Through storm and stress to peace! From darkness to light! Such is the story of Luther's own experience. Nor did peace and light come at last till love had sounded the deeps of sin, and faith had spanned the chasm from man's need to the infinite mercy and grace of God; "The just shall live by faith." Such, in brief, was the religious experience of Luther. The reformation thus begun made the Reformation possible. With undimmed vision and unclouded certitude, the great leader consecrated his powers to make real for others, in a redeemed life and a transformed church, the central realities of his own soul.

So much, then, for the primacy of Christian experience in the life and work of these three epoch-making personalities of Chris-

tian history. If now we turn for a moment to the more specific problem of the development of Christian doctrine, we shall be impressed with the same fact. There is a tendency today, both within and without the church, to decry creeds and dogmas as useless bits of worn-out intellectual machinery, to be cast upon the scrap-heap of the centuries. If that is what they are, then that is where they belong. The sooner we rid ourselves of them, the better. But we are not ready to consent to such a judgment. Creeds and dogmas are the religious experiences of human hearts, intellectualized, formulated, and evaluated. They are the judgments of meaning which the mind puts upon feelings too deep for words. Back within the shadow, behind every formulation of doctrine which has taken hold of the mind and conscience of the church, are human hearts which have held converse with the Eternal, and in the wonder of it have sought to interpret to their fellows what eye hath not seen nor ear heard, but which has entered into the heart of man with the grace of the Evangel.

I can illustrate my meaning in no better way than to refer to a single great doctrine, than which none other, except it be the Person of Christ, has been esteemed so pregnant with worth for the life of the Christian church. I mean the doctrine of the Atonement. Like some mediaeval cathedral, spanning the centuries in its growth, upon which many men of many minds have labored, nor always with the same plan, building and rebuilding, casting up a buttress here, opening a window there, whence new light might shine upon the altar of the "lamb slain from the foundation of the world," so stands this central teaching of the church, the building incomplete, waiting the reverent thought of future generations; perhaps never to be finished on earth, from man's finite incapacity for the full thought of the Infinite.

Among the builders was Anselm of Canterbury, the first in the history of Christian theology formally to define this doctrine. "He first compelled men to look at it, and to study it, and to see the Evangel in it." The theory of the atonement which he built has not proved altogether adequate to the growing thought of the church. The question of a measureless guilt demanding a measureless satisfaction, to be applied to man's need by processes neither wholly rational nor wholly moral, has given place to con-

ceptions more fundamental in character and more in accord with our growing appreciation of the character of God. However much his views still influence the thought of the church, we cannot express ourselves today in the terms of Anselm. The intervening centuries have brought us nearer, we believe, to an understanding of the mind and heart of God. The value of Anselm's theory of the atonement for us lies, not in the adequacy of his religious philosophy, but rather in the adequacy of his experience of the redemptive power of Christ to which his philosophy attempts to give utterance. Behind the theory stands a great soul in touch with God, finding its highest satisfaction, forgiveness, peace, and power in that divine fellowship. Religion, rather than speculation, was fundamental in his life. His central interest lies here, as is revealed in his letters and meditations. His deepest satisfaction was in that which had been wrought within his own soul. The play of his keen intellect over these experiences of the heart had as its one end their illumination, both for himself and others.

What is true of Anselm is true of every other great Christian thinker who has reverently approached this central problem of the Christian faith. Aside from the offering of the mind which each has brought to its solution, this is their great worth, that each speaks a message out of his own heart of the forgiving grace of God. Intellectual interpretations of the atonement change from age to age, but the experience of the atonement, as it came to Christian on the way to the Celestial City, will never change. "So I saw in my dream, that just as Christian came up to the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and so continued to do, till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in, and I saw it no more."

The greatest value, then, of dogmas and systems of belief, is not so much in what they say as in what they do not say, in what they imply of thoughts and feelings too deep for words. They are revelations of human souls, and as such are to be given due measure of appreciation.

The past has, moreover, bequeathed to us its heritage of beliefs and institutions which appear meaningless in the light of

present-day Christian thought, or else outgrown in the progressive unfolding of the Christian consciousness. Protestantism is repelled, for instance, by that exaggerated veneration of the Virgin Mary which prevailed in mediaeval Christianity. It has little sympathy for the institution of monasticism, which was one of the strong pillars of the church in the Middle Ages. If, however, we should approach these and kindred doctrines from the standpoint of their origins, and could enter into the spirit of those who gave them birth, we would find that they were prompted by the same needs which are today the foundation facts of Christianity.

If the church had remained true to the primitive conception of her Master as of one who, whatever his origin, had yet lived a veritable human life, with the limitations of humanity, its joys and sorrows, its privations and toils, its temptations and achievements, the worship of the Virgin Mary would never have had so great a place in the church. It was because theology took him from the haunts of men and exalted him to a position far removed from the conditions of humanity, clothing him in the mystic glory of eternity, that the human heart rebelled, and in the place of the Jesus whom it had lost found satisfaction for its craving in the compassion of the Virgin. Protestantism has sought with sympathy and sincerity to find again the Christ who "is touched with the feelings of our infirmities," and to restore him to the heart of the church. In so doing, the church has unquestionably arrived at a truer conception of her faith. We should never forget, however, that this very achievement of Protestantism bears forceful testimony to the fundamental worth of that cruder experience unconsciously protesting against ecclesiastical dogma and voicing the common need of the heart for sympathy and love.

O Saul, it shall be a Face like my face that receives thee;
A Man like to me thou shalt love and be loved by, forever;
A Hand like this hand shall throw open the gates of new life to thee!
See the Christ stand!

The presence of the primal Christian experience in doctrines which no longer adequately express the content of the Christian

life is equally apparent in institutions once useful, but today outgrown. It requires no great insight to criticise monasticism, for example. Its flight from the labors and duties and joys of life, the extravagances of asceticism, the immorality which it sometimes sheltered—these and many other points of attack it offers to the critical spirit of our age. Yet it may be reasonably asked whether in monasticism, as illustrated in its noblest representatives, a Gregory or a Bernard, an Aquinas or a Savonarola, there is not expressed a Christian experience which is vital and essential, the mastery of the flesh by the spirit, the protest of the soul against enslavement to the material interests of life. And it may also be asked whether there is not something of permanent worth in that experience which we are in serious danger of losing in our easy-going, pleasure-loving, luxury-fostering age. It is easy to see how institutions, once the incarnations of a living spirit, crumble and pass away. But the imperative need that the Christian experience shall embody itself in institutions will never pass away. It is fundamental; for life must create for itself the instruments of its expression.

We might leave the subject at this point, were it not for certain practical reflections which grow out of the consideration of this theme. What has been said must not be taken as depreciating in the least the task of the theologian, of taking the raw material of Christian experience, defining it, systematizing it, and giving expression to it. Next to the imperative of the Christian experience itself, no need can be greater than that of adequately interpreting it to the minds of men. Theologies may pass away, but theology never. New experiences teach new truths, and old ones are seen in new lights and assume new significance. As long as this is so, new theologies will be propounded for each new age with its increment of truth, for each new life with its increment of experience. Only we must discover how to use these creatures of the mind, and how to re-create them when the need demands.

The second reflection is set forth in the closing words of Sabatier's *Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit*, where he says, summing up his argument in that illuminating book: "The labor of philosophical reflection is nevertheless not the

essential thing in the order of the Christian life. . . . There is something more urgent, more necessary, than to explain the experiences of piety, and that is to create them." If the Christian experience is fundamental in the history of Christianity, it follows that the first business of the church is the creation of that experience; its creation, I repeat, not its embodiment in institutions nor its interpretation in terms of thought. Religion is primary. All else is secondary. The first great task of the church of Christ is to lead the souls of men into the presence of God and of eternal realities. It is to lead them into the presence of Jesus, to teach them to see with his eyes, to hear with his ears, to understand with his mind, to feel with his heart the divine interpretation of the meaning of life. There, and there only, will be born the reverent and holy fear, the sublime assurance, the power of faith and hope and love from which flow the streams of spiritual refreshment.

It sometimes seems as though the church were more vitally interested in the science of religion than in religion itself; in the task of criticism and historical interpretation than in the creation of the Christian experience. This ought she to do, but not to leave the other undone. For of what vital worth are her scientific interpretations, if with them there is not born that consciousness of God which makes sacred the ground on which we stand; the sense of sin that humbles, and of grace that exalts, of faith that sends us out with joy into the Promised Land of work, of love that unlocks the treasure-house of life? We need all the light which historical criticism can cast upon the Psalms and Prophets. But more than that we need the experience of God, from which the soul itself springs into song, voicing its needs and its satisfactions in cadences that pulsate with life and power; the experience of God from which the spirit of prophecy awakes, heartening the souls of men for deeds of heroic achievement in righteousness.

Whatever other varied tasks belong to the Christian ministry and the Christian church, these two are central and paramount—first of all the creation, afterwards the interpretation, of the primal Christian experience.

CONSERVATISM IN RELIGION

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Human progress depends on the discovery of the forces which are active in the universe and of the way to use them so as to accomplish desired ends. Power is in itself non-moral, and may be used for either moral or immoral purposes. All experience proves that conservatism is an immense power in human nature, and in religion probably more than in any other sphere of human life. It seems strange, then, that more attention has not been given to the nature and source of this power, and to the methods by which it may be so employed as to help and build up rather than obstruct and destroy the spiritual life of men.

The power of conservatism affects doctrine, ethics, ceremonial and liturgical forms, and polity in unequal degrees, although it affects them all very greatly. This essay, however, is concerned only with conservatism in doctrine, and leaves the other fields to other students.

By conservatism in this sphere we understand the clinging to old forms as opposed to new. In saying that conservatism is a non-moral power, we mean that we cannot regard the old view as true or right because it is old, nor the new as right or wrong because it is new. Those who stand for the old because it is old would always, consciously or unconsciously, have a reason for their higher valuation of the old other than its mere age, and we propose to consider various reasons which can be given for a preference for the old. It should be understood that what we are here concerned with is not the age of a doctrine as known in the history of thought, but its familiarity or novelty to a certain circle of hearers or to a given generation of mankind. It is, for instance, at least conceivable that certain so-called modern views of theologians were held by Jesus, or even by some of the Old Testament prophets; but if they are new to a given person or congregation or generation, the power of conservatism will in-

evitably oppose them so long as they are novel, although it may support and apply them when they have become familiar, and thus acquired for the individual or generation the prescription which attaches to the old.

We may roughly divide our investigation of the nature of conservatism into two parts: *first*, the elements in older views and their relations which secure their support; and, *second*, the elements in new views and their relations which repel, and tend to cause their rejection.

I. THE MAINTENANCE OF THE OLD FOR ITS OWN SAKE

From the natural inertia of human thought in society, the number of those adhering to the older views will always be much greater than the number of those accepting the new. The children of any generation receive religious truth from the mature people of their time—their parents, teachers, and preachers—ready-made. These doctrines, in the forms in which they are presented, are, of course, in normal conditions, held to be true by the adults who transmit them to the children; and this in consequence of the experience which these adults have had of the world, or in spite of it. They are, therefore, correlated with the facts of experience and harmonious with them; and, having been psychologically possible in the parents, they will be psychologically possible in the children in the measure in which the experience of the children resembles that of the parents.

What they are taught will at first be accepted by the children as true, on the authority of their teachers, and the doctrines thus instilled will be woven into the children's whole view of life, and remain there, unless withdrawn or destroyed by some later experience. A system of doctrine developed through ages of study and experience will be sure to have so much in it to commend it to those to whom it is presented, and professional religious teachers will have at their command such well-tried arguments in support of it, that only the most active and powerful minds will go beyond or aside from what they have been taught. The teachers of new views of religious truth in any generation will therefore necessarily be few, and the proportion of people who

adhere to a so-called new view will depend chiefly on the length of time that the new view has been actively disseminated. It may be that two men in different parts of the world independently discover or invent the telephone, or phonograph, or wireless telegraph; but even then it is rarely more than two of the millions of the race who make the same discovery at the same time, and their contemporaneous action is to be explained by the action upon them of common forces. So a new view in religion or philosophy begins with a very few, and spreads only slowly and gradually to the multitude.

This is not *a priori* theory but well-recognized fact. It is a common observation that most preachers, although their profession requires them to be thinking theologically, remain in substantially the doctrinal position which they reached in their theological schools and the earliest years of their ministry. How much more will the members of their churches, most of whose time is occupied with thinking about other things than religion or theology, retain with little change the forms of doctrine received in early youth! In any generation, then, in which newer and older ideas of religious truth compete, the vast majority of people who have any definite religious views at all will adhere to the older forms, unless influenced by some very unusual and powerful movement, like the Reformation in Germany.

From the natural inertia of thought in the individual, most men are prone to cling to the old and familiar rather than accept the new. This principle is to be distinguished from the one previously considered. There we were concerned with the probability of the presentation of newer forms of doctrine to the people of a generation; and we saw that in a given generation the newer ideas are likely to be presented for consideration to only a few. Here we have to do with the acceptance of opinions when they are presented. Of all those to whom the newer views are presented after the older ones have once been accepted, it is likely that but a small proportion will change their views. If all minds were constantly and actively logical, of course, there could be no such rule as this. The most reasonable form of doctrine would be accepted and adhered to, whether it were old or new. But very few minds are thus rationally active, except in those spheres of life which occupy

their time and energy most directly; and even within those spheres the men who, by logical thinking, improve on the ideas and methods transmitted to them by others are the exceptions. The familiar psychological laws of mental habit explain the tendency of early ideas to become permanent in a given mind. The further fact that where definite and extended religious instruction has been received, it becomes interwoven with all the principles, ideals, and aspects of life, and the more completely, the more seriously the religious views are held and applied to conduct, must make it apparent that any considerable change of religious conceptions would mean for the most earnest religious persons a mental revolution, a recasting of the whole outlook upon life, and thus be a difficult process, the tendency to resist which would be very strong.

As religious views concern and affect the emotional ties which bind men to persons, human and divine, the whole strength of these emotions opposes any change which may seem to imperil the position or relations of the objects of these emotions. The first class of such emotional ties is that uniting the individual with his friends, kinsmen, and forefathers. To discard a belief which has been earnestly held and defended by some hero or saint whom I honor, some parent or grandparent whom I love and reverence, some friend with whom I have the most intimate and affectionate relations, seems to be a reflection on his judgment and mental powers, if not his character; to be exalting myself and my own mind as superior to his; or even to be—what it often really and tragically is—the erection of a barrier between my friend and myself. The more noble the nature, the more it revolts from such apparent disloyalty, and the stronger the motive to distrust the newer view, even though it may seem to the reason the more probable one.

This kind of conservatism is illustrated in the story of the African chief who was about to submit to Christian baptism at the hands of a missionary. Before doing so, he asked the missionary what had become of his ancestors—whether he should meet them in heaven. When the missionary replied that this was impossible, they were all hopelessly lost in hell, the chief decided to share their fate rather than separate himself from them by

accepting Christianity; and we say that it was the nobler strain in his character which moved him to that decision. Again, apart from the dogma of the superhuman (i.e. essentially non-human) origin of the Scriptures, our reverence for the Prophets and Apostles, as well as for the later Fathers, might lead us to say that their views of God and Christ and salvation must have been right, and that it is very presumptuous for us to set up our views against theirs. This feeling is sometimes manifested in ludicrous ways, as in the case of the woman who, when the minister began to read from the Revised Version of the Bible, indignantly left the church, saying that if the King James Version was good enough for Saint Paul it was good enough for her. The nature of the conservatism was the same as in the other instances, although it was not so logical.

The second class of such emotional ties is that existing between a man and the objects of his specifically religious thought. For example, most Christians have been taught to think of Jesus as being God, and therefore as having at all times had the attributes of God, omniscience, omnipotence, and the rest. No matter how contrary this position is to the teaching of the Bible and to the necessities of thought, any attempt to convince them that Jesus was even for a time limited, and without the full powers of God, seems like degrading him—a lowering of the estimate in which they have held him, a derogation of the honor due him, an impeachment of his character; and in proportion as they realize that they have been saved from sin and death through him, and thus feel bound to him by the strongest bonds of love, gratitude, adoration, and reverence, they resist any teaching which seems to lower his position or diminish the glory which belongs to him.

Older views of religious doctrine are generally conceived as having been revealed or accredited by superhuman agencies, divine or angelic, and having therefore the authority of God behind them; the newer views are consequently regarded as opposing God, contradicting his Word, denying his veracity, having their origin, at the best, in fallible human reason or vain imagination, but not infrequently ascribed to the inspiration of devils, or at least to malignancy and a wilful resistance of God and goodness. Hence the newer forms of doctrine are abhorred and feared by

the pious, and looked upon as traps and snares, the more dangerous as they are the more reasonable and thus more likely to seduce the unwary. This feeling and attitude exist in all degrees, from the sorrowful disapproval of one who is thought to be mistakenly teaching what is different from God-revealed truth to fanatical persecution, torture, and crucifixion or burning at the stake of the man who dares to "blaspheme God" by teachings contrary to the popular religion. It is almost a universal phenomenon, and by no means confined to Christendom. Several of the philosophers of ancient Greece were accused of impiety and in danger of death, because they combated some popular religious ideas. This was one of the charges on which Socrates was put to death, and Aristotle was compelled by a similar charge to flee from Athens. In Hinduism and Mohammedanism religious doctrine is regarded as having been revealed by God rather than consciously discovered or unconsciously developed by man. Jesus was put to death for blaspheming God by teaching what was contrary to his revealed truth, and on similar grounds martyrs have suffered from the earliest to the latest times. An interesting illustration of this feeling in our own times occurs in a book of poems called *Canadian Heart Songs*, in which are the following lines:

"You teachers in the colleges supported by the church,
Who pretend to wondrous knowledge and to marvellous research,
Who are really jackals, tearing at the vitals of all truth,
Sowing seeds of dire disaster in the fertile minds of youth,
How dare you say that that is false which Jesus says is true?
And palm off long-exploded lies, and claim they're something new?
Your 'new theology,' all false, is old as sin and death;
It bites just like the Serpent's fang; it smells of Satan's breath."

As bearing on the same principle, it is worth noting that propagators of fabricated religions like Mormonism, or of erratic sects like those of Dowie and Elijah Sanford, or of strange doctrines like those of Christian Science, find most success with the multitudes when they claim that their peculiar teachings are not the result of their own invention, discovery, or study, but are divine revelations made to them, which are not subject in any respect to revision or the test of reason. Indeed, the general disrepute

in which rationalism and rationalists stand with pious people generally is a symptom of the lack of confidence in the power of human reason and the consequent demand for some other authoritative source of truth which is still very wide-spread. We are not here concerned with the theory of revelation or the question of the real source of religious truth, but are noticing the actual psychological situation in the religious world of the past and present, of which religious leaders must take account.

The peculiar place of earlier beliefs in memory and in the history of the life of the individual, even when they have been subsequently supplanted by newer beliefs, is such that, in periods of great excitement, strain, depression, weakness, sorrow, pain, and dying the older beliefs are apt to resume their original place in the mind and feelings, and cause the man to abandon the later ones. Illustrations of this fact are common enough, and seem simple enough to understand. The principle of the Roman Catholic Church, that in the first seven years of a child's life it can imprint its doctrines so firmly upon the mental nature that they will be practically ineffaceable, is a recognition of this fact. The case of a very prominent evangelist and religious teacher who, after a "modern" theological education, was "converted" and returned to the earlier forms of belief, is probably to be explained in this way.

The fact, often made much of, that conservative evangelists, preaching the "old" doctrines in the old forms, are generally far more successful in persuading large masses of people to a definite profession of the faith which they were taught in childhood, and to a change of ethical direction in their lives, than those evangelists whose doctrines are more unfamiliar, is without doubt largely due to this principle and to the one next to be explained. So also we shall understand the stories, doubtless in some cases true, of dying persons who turn away with repugnance from the words of the minister who tries to comfort and sustain them with a modern gospel which they may have accepted and approved in later years, and find satisfaction only in the old doctrines presented to them in the forms familiar in childhood and early youth. The earlier beliefs were accepted with a whole-heartedness and perfect faith which, from the nature of the case, cannot be given to the

later ones. The associations of the earlier beliefs are with the most optimistic and innocent period of life, and with those memories which are most vivid and most dear in later years. There will therefore be a glory and strength about the earlier forms of faith which only in rare instances can be equalled by later forms, however sincerely accepted; and the later will seldom be so harmoniously adjusted, or so intimately interwoven with the general views of life and its interests and affections, as the earlier. Hence the frequently preponderating power of the earlier forms.

The popular, pseudo-pragmatic test of doctrines by the character and efficiency of the lives of men who hold the older and the newer forms will probably, in a considerable majority of cases, be more favorable to those who hold the older, for two reasons:

First, the enthusiasm, confidence, and energy of a man in affirming and propagating his beliefs will be commonly in proportion to the degree of assurance with which he holds them, and this is almost necessarily greater in the case of one who holds without change the faith first presented to him than in the case of him who has become convinced that his earlier beliefs are untenable, and that other forms of faith are nearer the truth. Just as the river confined between narrow rock walls in the canyon will be deeper than one that freely meanders over the level prairie, so the man who has never admitted any doubt or question with regard to the truth of his faith will be more intense than the one who recognizes a measure of truth in doctrines which he does not accept and a measure of error in doctrines which at first he accepted unreservedly, and who admits the possibility that some elements in the faith which he still holds may be mistaken and have to be abandoned when the fuller light shall come.

While we cannot here enter into epistemological questions and problems of theological method, we may observe that all more thorough theologians are constrained to make the distinction between faith and knowledge, and to recognize the relative uncertainty of the former, and the voluntary element in it which does not belong to knowledge in the strict sense. But it is probable that the great majority of laymen, and even a considerable proportion of preachers and religious teachers, do not recognize this distinction, and that, especially in cases where

faith held has never been subjected to tests of severe doubt, it is assumed that its certainty is of the same kind as that of matters of every-day experience in the realm of sense-knowledge. In such cases, doubtless, the faith will have the element of assurance in it, which, although based on ignorance and error, will be as powerful for him who possesses it as if it were securely founded.

Again, as has been noted above, faith, when rightly distinguished from knowledge, has in it a voluntary element. That is, it requires a certain effort of will to apply the faith to life, and a greater effort as the application is more difficult and the doubt more serious. Now, in any given individual at a given time the available amount of energy is limited. If he have a given theory (article of faith) to apply to life and a particular task to accomplish, he cannot spend on the task the energy exhausted in clinging to the theory. This seems to explain, at least partially, the unusual success in social and religious work of some High Church celibates, Salvation Army officers, Jesuits, and others, who assume the doctrine transmitted to them as unquestionable and turn all their energy to the accomplishment of the practical moral task at hand. This principle is illustrated in Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, in the chapter on "The Lamp of Obedience." Ruskin there maintains that, unless one particular system of architecture is universally adopted in England, there can be no real architecture at all. The principle is that if the energy of the architect is dissipated by learning various systems and weighing their relative merits for the problem at hand, he will have too little left for the solving of his problem and the true development of any given system.

Second, religious and moral revival or conversion is far simpler and easier on the basis of accepted and familiar doctrines than on that of unfamiliar ones. Attention has been called to the fact that most successful evangelists are conservative in theology, that is, they preach the doctrines which are most familiar and most generally accepted by those to whom they speak. We have already pointed out one reason for this in the peculiar place which the earlier beliefs have in the lives of those who have subsequently abandoned or changed their faith. But in most cases the old faith is the only one with which the converts in revivals are really

familiar at all. In many cases they have never questioned the truth of this doctrine, even though they have not given it effect as the guiding force in their lives. In other cases, the failure positively to assent to the doctrine has been due to carelessness or frivolity and not to any serious logical or philosophical difficulty. In all cases, the fact that it is familiar and is known to have been or to be held by many of the best people with whom the converts are acquainted is a far more effectual ground for accepting it and acting upon it than any logical arguments which the speaker could bring to bear upon them in the few minutes for which he has their attention. The average man has very little skill or capacity for reasoning on religious subjects; and the man who is converted in the revival meeting will ordinarily be below the average in this respect, as he is not the one who has been faithful in attendance on religious exercises and in Bible study, but rather the one who has been quite indifferent to these matters and given his whole attention to supporting or amusing himself. The appeal to such people is through the conscience and the emotions, not through the intellect; and that which is novel to the mind, however true it may be, will only confuse and disturb rather than convince and convict. Thus it comes about that the older doctrines will almost invariably be more effective in arousing morally such masses of people as are converted in missions and revival meetings, and hence they naturally come to be regarded as the saving truths, whatever their actual relation to the truth may be.

Convincing evidence of the seriousness of the difficulty of getting common people to accept unfamiliar doctrine is the experience of missionaries in work among non-Christian peoples. When the work is begun, almost always the preaching will have to continue months or years before the first converts are made, and the higher the stage of culture of the people and the better their religious ideas, the longer and more difficult will the process of conversion be. Thus in China the work of the early missionaries was very slow; and in Mohammedan lands, where the prevailing religion is monotheistic and more like Christianity than any other great form of religion at the present day, there have been, up to the present time, only small numbers of converts.

We spoke of this test of the truth of doctrines by the character of those who hold them, preach them, and are converted by them as a *pseudo-pragmatic* test. This term has been partially justified by the preceding discussion. We have showed that the tendency would be for evangelists to preach more effectively, and for people to be more readily converted, where the familiar doctrines are preached than where the doctrines are in less familiar or newer forms, regardless of the truth of the forms used, whether old or new. The conservative doctrine will be more effective on account of its familiarity. To the extent that this is a correct explanation of its force, it is evident that the effectiveness of the doctrine is no proof whatever of its real truth or value. By this we do not mean that it is conceivable that men might be led to righteous, loving lives by their acceptance of false doctrine. We would insist, rather, that, wherever the faith leads to improvement in the life, it must be because of the truth which was in the faith. But the situations which we have in mind are those of a larger or smaller measure of truth, of more or less reasonable forms of the statement; and our contention is that it is entirely explicable that preaching which presents familiar doctrines and motives should be more effective in reforming and converting men than a preaching of the same truths in forms more reasonable and adequate but less familiar. This we believe to be incontrovertible. The pragmatic test of a doctrine is the effort to determine its value or truth by its effect upon life. But, as has been shown, in the ordinary community it is impossible to put older and newer doctrines or forms of doctrines to comparative tests on the masses of the people, because the psychological conditions under which they would have to be tried are so dissimilar. All the power of conservatism which we are examining and estimating in this essay makes for the greater effectiveness of the older forms of doctrine, and frustrates any attempt at direct comparison of results.

Those whose money maintains and extends religious work are most apt to be conservative, and therefore the propagation of conservative views will be much more strongly aided by the publication of literature, building of churches, commissioning of missionaries, and education of students than the propagation of

newer or more unfamiliar views. The tendency of the possession of property to make a man conservative in general character is well known. As a rule, capital is conservative in politics and in business. Any change of government, of law, of social situation, may imperil trade, depreciate stocks, diminish incomes, make labor more costly or customers scarcer. Especially is this true with men who accumulate their money in legitimate ways. The gambler may remain a gambler, make his fortune one day, risk and lose it the next; but the man who by steady hard work through many years has accumulated a fortune will not lightly risk his money in new enterprises and under new conditions; and he opposes any reduction of the tariff or interference with existing business methods, because any change may unfavorably affect his business or property. Gamblers are not generally good church members, enthusiastic in the propagation of religion; but faithful, steady, hard-working business men very frequently are. The qualities which have made them successful in business are the qualities which make them useful in the church, and which make them view life seriously, religiously.

The conservative temper of their life as a whole is very apt to prevail also in their religious life. Such steady, reliable men, sufficiently interested in religious enterprises to give them their financial support, are ordinarily those who have been connected with the church for a good part of their lives. They became familiar with the prevailing theological doctrines and formulas and accepted them in youth, when their minds were fresh and active, and have had no time or occasion for such study or thought as would lead to a revision of their beliefs in later years. They go to church to worship, to be encouraged, comforted, or put to sleep, not to be instructed in Christian doctrine, least of all in doctrines different from those they have learned to regard as the final truth, supernaturally revealed by God. They have more confidence in older preachers, with seasoned judgment, than in the younger ones, with their new-fashioned, and perhaps foolish, notions. If they assume the part of dogmatists, they are frequently certain of their own infallibility in proportion as they are ignorant of other views and the grounds for them, and are more conservative than the conservative preachers who have

instructed them. The more earnestly they believe the doctrines they hold, the more conscientiously will they support those ministers, churches, missionaries, and schools which teach and maintain what they believe to be the truth.

Fortunately most church-members have learned to trust experts, and are willing to leave the examination into the theological beliefs of candidates for the ministry and theological professors to those who have made a study of theology. But the popular support of Bible Schools, where earnest young people without adequate education are drilled for a few months or years in the conservative forms of doctrines derived from the Bible in traditional ways, and then sent out to convert the heathen or feed the flocks of Christendom, is a demonstration of the appeal which conservative religious forms make to conservative men of business. The circulation, at the expense of two Christian laymen, of booklets in defence of such conservative forms and formulas among two hundred and fifty thousand Christian teachers and leaders is an illustration of this fact. A Bible School which the writer recently visited in Great Britain, where, at the expense of such conservative laymen, splendid provision had been made for dormitories, lecture-rooms, and the physical needs of the students in general, but none for modern theological books or periodicals in the library, is another example. The transference by such conservative men of their membership and financial support from churches where the preaching is out of harmony with their views to others in the community where it better accords with them is a common and effective expression of the earnestness of their faith and their conservatism in form and feeling.

It is said that when the financial agent of one of the Western colleges in the United States was planning to collect money in the East for the college, he was advised by one who was familiar with conditions not to waste his time on the liberal churches. That meant, if the adviser was correct, that in those churches which, in comparison with others in the community, had the reputation of being liberal, either the men of means would be absent or they would not be so ready to give their money for denominational education. The reason for this has already been explained, but it will perhaps appear more clearly, and the significance of the

reputation of the church in this connection will be seen, as we go on to the second part of this study.

Doctrinal standards fixed by the law of the state or recognized by it, ecclesiastical organizations, and institutions of every sort have great stability. The importance of a definition of sound doctrine has always and rightly been recognized, although the reason of its importance has very generally been misunderstood. All organized associations for common worship have felt the need of an explicit formulation of their faith. Once stated, members are received into the church or the denomination, and particularly into its ministry, with implicit or explicit assent to these confessions or, as they soon become, rules of faith, or symbols. It is generally assumed that only those who assent to these creeds will unite themselves with the church; and it is held that men who, after being admitted into the ministry or priesthood, change their views for such as were not in harmony with the symbols should resign their ministry voluntarily, or be removed from it by ecclesiastical authority. When once such tests have been adopted, it is almost inevitable that a considerable proportion of the membership and the clergy of the denomination will adhere strictly to the creeds in their original letter, and, in intention at least, in their original meaning; and any within the body who desire to have them set aside or revised are regarded by them as recreants who ought in honesty to withdraw from the church, and are sometimes stigmatized as heretics and false teachers, if not as hypocrites.

In cases where a religious body, by a large majority, has modified its creed, it has repeatedly been held by the courts that the minority which adhered to the original creed was legally the church, and as such entitled to hold the property, of which the majority is thus deprived. The civil courts are more strictly bound to the letter and original intent of a document than the ecclesiastical leaders, who might feel morally justified in letting the outgrown letter fall into desuetude or even in setting it aside, if they believed themselves in so doing to be faithful to its spirit. It is clear that where the church is under state control there is still greater difficulty in changing its doctrinal basis, as the general public has no particular interest in making such a change, and

those who desire a change would under ordinary circumstances always have the weight of prejudice against them. "If they did not like the creed, why did they enter the church; if they do not like it, why do they remain?"

Theological schools have often been bound by their charters to teach certain doctrines, and to engage only such instructors as shall hold and defend those doctrines. The fastening of prescribed forms of doctrine upon self-perpetuating institutions possessing endowments which are in the eye of the law charitable trusts, and as such under the cognizance and protection of the courts, thus obstructs progress, and puts under suspicion any one who proposes change, thereby depriving him of his influence in the institution with which he is connected, even if it does not make him immediately liable to removal or to an ecclesiastical penalty.

Finally, the liturgical and sacramental forms of a church are conserved with great tenacity, and perpetuate the doctrines which they embody or with which they are associated. The Scriptures read, the prayers repeated, the songs sung, and the creeds recited, all have doctrinal implications and correspondences; and the richer and more venerable the liturgy is, the more serious would be any attempt to alter it in consistency with a change in the doctrinal point of view, and the more strongly those to whom it is familiar and dear would resist any such proposal. Being associated with the worship of God, the source of truth, the forms of worship are felt to partake of his sanctity and veracity, and hence to be rightly immutable.

II. THE REJECTION OF THE NEW AS SUCH

Men frequently ignore the newer doctrines and decline to consider them at all, because they are prejudiced against them or their defenders by those who, professing knowledge of the matter, condemn them. So much is spoken and written about these subjects that no one has time to consider or competence to judge it all, and every one has to rely to a large extent on the judgment of others. But such judgments are not always either intelligent or impartial. It is often enough to condemn a teaching that it

disagrees with some familiar conceptions. Sometimes a man's views will not be considered because of the denomination or school or persons with which he is associated. In other instances prejudice is aroused against the opinions of a writer because of some eccentricities in his character. Anything, in fact, which can be said against a man from any point of view may be sufficient to prevent his ideas from receiving attention from those who would otherwise consider and perhaps accept them. Thus, an orthodox congregation often refuses to consider a candidate who has been educated at a school which is tainted with heterodoxy; conservative men take care to send their sons to schools which have the reputation of being "sound," and choose the church, the periodicals, and the books which are esteemed orthodox.

A social penalty, sometimes almost an interdict, may be imposed upon religious views of certain sorts and those who propagate or accept them. A man's connection with one church or another may seriously affect his success in business, and in most cases the body holding the more conservative views offers an advantage. Since it is well understood that men are strongly influenced by their teachers and by the opinions of those about them, it is not strange that those who believe the new doctrines to be false and harmful should be unwilling to expose themselves or their friends to them at all, lest they be tainted or led astray. There is thus a large probability that any new doctrine will not receive fair consideration from the average man. It is true that among young people, if the new is given consideration at all, it is likely to be overvalued and have undue influence, from the same undeveloped judgment that we have been referring to, and that this to some extent counterbalances the conservative prejudice against the new. But it remains true that any new view, good or bad, has the weight of popular prejudice against it, and is sure not to receive impartial consideration from the mass of men so long as it is new to them.

People of well-balanced and sober judgment are likely to be repelled by the temperament and character of those who defend and those who readily accept opinions while they are new or because they are new, and to reject the opinion out of distaste for their adherents. As the reaction of thought and life upon

each other in any given social condition tends to adapt each to the other, and thus to relate and harmonize thought and action in their various normal forms, so any new form of thought is likely to be out of harmony with the whole social condition in which it appears, and to cause friction and abnormal action in various ways. This may be illustrated by considering various classes of people who are predisposed to accept the new, and their relations to harmonious and normal social conditions.

Thoughtless and frivolous people are apt to be attracted by the new and to accept it solely because of its novelty. We cannot imagine that there was any considerable depth of character in the Athenians and the strangers sojourning there, who "spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing." Those who are only interested in the new are those who have no serious occupation or view of life. There is a class of people who desire to be entertained by novel things, whether in the material or the mental world; and they cannot but be repellent to those who are earnestly trying to do their duty and make the world better. Such adherents are therefore more of a hindrance than a help to any cause which they take up; and it is a matter of observation that they are most attracted by those teachers, those churches and that literature which have a reputation for novelty, or heresy, or liberalism. If a preacher of the newer views avoids the name of innovation, he will hardly draw hearers of this class, however new and radical his views may really be; and, on the other hand, the man who advertises his radicalism will have a train of novelty seekers, though at bottom his teaching may be innocuous and even commonplace. This helps to explain the weakness of churches having the name of being liberal; for the kind of people we have been describing will not sacrifice money or time or strength to assist in propagating the faith which they assume so easily and hold so lightly.

Erratic people are prone to accept new doctrines because they seem to promise the satisfaction of some need they have felt, which the older churches and the more familiar doctrines have not met. Individuals who for any reason have developed abnormally and entertain peculiar notions or aspirations are likely to be discontented with churches and systems of doctrine

which do not emphasize those ideas or desires as they do. Thus ill-balanced persons of all sorts are likely to leave conservative surroundings and to consort with circles in which new ideas are welcome, and especially where satisfaction seems to be offered to their individual bent. The mystic will be attracted by Theosophy; the sick, by Christian Science; those who have an appetite for the supernatural, by claims of a special revelation from God and the power to work miracles; the seeker for industrial and social reform, by the church which gives special attention to that subject; and thus those who, in comparison with the average man, are excessively interested in any phase of thought will be drawn to each new teaching which promises satisfaction for the particular need felt, or is thought possibly to afford it. But of course the ordinary man feels uncomfortable in the society of extremists of any sort, and is likely to avoid that which pleases them just for that reason.

Self-seeking people are often attracted by the new because it seems to offer them opportunity for gain, or honor, or other advantage not attainable in conservative organizations, or because the new doctrine seems to license some desired course of action condemned by the old. Men whose ambitions for office or preferment are disappointed in a certain church, or who feel themselves slighted or aggrieved in some way, often for that reason go off and form a new organization, or join a different denomination, or at least another church from that in which they have been. It frequently happens, also, that people who have been in congregations where certain methods of business or forms of pleasure are frowned upon leave such congregations and go to others which put less narrow restrictions on their desires or habits. This change may take them from one church to another in which the form of doctrine is at least as old and familiar as in that which they have left; but it also carries others over into newer organizations or more liberal churches, to which they sometimes contribute an element not wholly desirable. A similar result comes about in a somewhat different way. Morality and religion are closely bound together, particularly in the consciousness of religious persons. Thus people who in a certain denomination are taught that card-playing, dancing, theatre-going, and the like are wrong,

will regard such moral standards as inseparable from the religious teachings which are their counterpart. If, then, they are led to accept newer views of religious truth, and thus to reject, at least partially, those which they had before held, they will easily feel themselves emancipated also from the rules of conduct that were associated with the older views. Sometimes other principles of conduct are taught in connection with the new doctrine, and sometimes not; but the release from the older rules may be felt as much in the one case as in the other. Thus the conservative in thought and action, seeing the liberal doing things which he (perhaps rightly, perhaps mistakenly—it is immaterial to the psychological situation) regards as sinful, is inclined to condemn the newer doctrine as naturally and necessarily leading to loose living, and its teachers and adherents as immoral. On the other hand, the newer doctrine may be rejected because it is seen that it would require better and more unselfish living, greater self-sacrifice and labor, than that which is more familiar.

The newer doctrines are likely to be accepted by the young and immature, who, without an adequate appreciation of the truth and value of the old, are more impressed by the contrasts between the old and the new than by their agreements, and go to extremes in their zeal for the one and their repudiation of the other. Without doubt, the rejection of newer forms of doctrine by conservatives is often entirely rational: they know well the value of their beliefs and the foundations on which they rest, and find this value unrecognized and the reasonable arguments which support their views ignored by those who represent the new view. The preceding discussion will have made it clear why young people much more readily accept new views than older people. But from the limitations of their knowledge, experience, and judgment which belong to their age, they cannot be expected to have the broader outlook which perceives the truth in the forms of thought which they reject as well as in that which they accept both in form and substance. They are, therefore, very likely to be impatient with the old fogies who refuse to see the new light, and in an unreasonable spirit to condemn the older views, of which their own are in reality always largely the product, often agreeing in principle though differing in details and

form of statement. Such young people, then, to a certain extent misrepresenting the newer conceptions, just as they fail of sympathetic understanding of the older, arouse in more mature minds both reasonable objections to their views and prejudice against them, and alienate some who might otherwise be more hospitable to the new doctrine.

III. PRACTICAL DEDUCTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

In the search for truth, the student should not be misled by the pseudo-pragmatic appraisal of the conservative doctrine, as such, but patiently test the doctrine itself. This principle has been explained above, and need here only be summarized. The pragmatic test of any theory is the value which it has, or would have, in practice, when properly applied. But no doctrine held doubtfully can compare in working efficiency with one held with unquestioning assurance; no doctrine held by an individual of general eccentric habit of mind can be compared in value with another doctrine held by a man of normal character; and, in general, no doctrine with the power of conservatism behind it can be properly compared in effect upon a community or an individual with a doctrine which is not supported by this power. In measuring the value of a doctrine by its effect upon life, great allowance must therefore be made for the psychological condition of those upon whom its effect is to be noted. In certain classes, as we have seen, there is a presumption in favor of the new rather than the old, which must be also allowed for; but among the maturer, wiser, and more stable part of the community, the psychological influence of the conservative form will be far superior to that of the newer, as such. In comparing older with newer forms of doctrine, then, where they really differ, the student will be obliged to fall back upon the judgment of his own mind as to which is the more reasonable and the more applicable to the problems of life, and on the feeling of his own heart as to which is the higher and nobler conception of God and life, and which would the more effectively prompt himself and other men to the most helpful and altruistic action.

There is great possibility of mischief in the labors of the honest

liberal who does not understand the right attitude toward older forms of doctrine and toward conservative people, nor know how to establish the new without losing the value of the old. It is not to be denied that there is a great deal of truth in the old doctrines in the historic forms in which they are held by the mass of Christian people today, and that this historic faith has shown itself in noble and self-sacrificing life. It is a very much easier thing to unsettle faith in good religious doctrine than to implant effective religious faith in one who does not possess it. Superficial ideas of the newer forms of religious faith have been spread far and wide by their friends as well as their enemies; and while their adversaries would be most certain to emphasize the differences rather than the agreements of the old and the new, the same mistake has often been made also by the supporters of the new.

In either case the tendency is to shake the faith of many in the older doctrines without giving them sufficient reason earnestly to accept and vitalize the new. A journalist, writing from the conservative standpoint of the harm done by liberal preaching, truly says: "The strength of all churches is in believing, not in doubting and denying—'This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith.' And a man does not need to be an expert, a scholar, or a theologian, to see when the effect of a preacher's discourses is to weaken faith and to fill the minds of his hearers with doubt." Where a minister believes the newer view to be the truer, he may well give care that the instruction of the children, so far as he can influence it, is in the better form. For the older members of his church, his best method will be the preaching of the truth contained in both the older and the newer forms of doctrine, with such care and sympathy that he may lead his hearers to see that the truth they have long believed is not to be questioned, but to be made even more firm and effective by some changes in the form in which it is held. Thus, if a man actually has a new view of truth which is more adequate and of greater worth than the older views—and here, again, we must beware of thinking that the new is true merely because it is new—he will be able to present it far more effectively, wherever conservative forces are active, by maintaining the most sympathetic

attitude toward the older beliefs than by impatience or intolerance of them. How difficult it is to do this, those know best who have tried to argue with firmly settled conservatives in whose minds there was little or no hope of any change. But that it is worth while, and required by faithfulness to God and man, cannot be doubted. The meaning of the term "conservative" is equivalent to "preservative," and for any intelligent conservative it signifies not the preservation of the old because it is old, but because it is good. The wise liberal must be as anxious to preserve all that is good in the old as the most zealous conservative.

A very serious temptation to insincerity comes to the liberal who realizes the power of conservatism. Knowing that in certain situations the reputation of being liberal, or loose, in his doctrine will prevent him from getting desired positions, or from winning the adherence of certain people, or, in general, militate against his usefulness or success, there is danger that he will endeavor to create the impression that he believes what he does not believe, that he accepts the old formulas and creeds in a degree which he really does not do. Cases are not unknown in which religious teachers have spoken or written in terms unequivocally indicating adherence to forms of doctrine to which they could not honestly assent. We need not here discuss whether such equivocation could in any circumstances be justified. The man with new and unfamiliar views of truth cannot hope to be completely and correctly understood in any expressions which he may use. Should he use more unusual and radical expressions, he may be successful in showing his hearers that he disagrees with them; but generally not nearly so successful in helping them to understand what he actually does believe and desires to teach them as if he used more familiar phraseology, which some will interpret more conservatively than he means it. He cannot be held responsible for all the ways in which his words may be misunderstood, even though he may be able to some extent to foresee such misunderstanding.

He is responsible, however, for false impressions of his own belief which he intended his words to convey. If, for example, he preaches on the atonement, and begins by pointing out how wrong the prevailing ideas of the atonement are, he is likely to alienate

the support and interest of those who have held them, and perhaps do more harm than good. If he expresses himself in such a way as naturally to convey the impression that he accepts the prevailing view in all respects, when that is far from being the case, he is a liar or a hypocrite. If he preaches so as to emphasize the truth in the familiar views, stating positively the changes which he believes necessary to the understanding of the truth, but without specifically calling attention to the fact that these views are new or different from the familiar ones, his work will probably be most helpful, and above reproach, where a part at least of his congregation is conservative.

We must frankly face the very serious situation which exists in most of the larger historic branches of the Christian church; namely, that creeds made centuries ago are still prescribed as tests for entrance to the ministry, and are, therefore, professed or subscribed to by hundreds of men who do not, in their true minds and hearts, assent to them in their original meaning or the modern popular interpretation of them. Without discussing here the morality of seeking ordination under such circumstances, which must be a matter for the careful consideration of candidates for the sacred office, we may urge upon the churches the necessity of doing away with the conditions which put its ministry in such a position. How this can be done does not fall within the scope of this article; but the changes which, as every intelligent man must recognize, are taking place in religious beliefs make it imperative that some way be found by which men who are compelled by all that is worthy, mentally and morally, in them, to accept some changes in view, may enter upon the service of their churches or continue in it without compromising their conscience.

The example of Jesus is instructive to his followers. He was in some ways much too conservative, and in others much too radical, for the people of his time; but he was always sympathetic to all that was good in the old and familiar beliefs and customs, and very judicious in his efforts to reform them. He did not fulfil the hopes of John the Baptist as a stern judge of sin and evil, nor the hopes of those who desired a Messiah that should free the people from Roman domination; but he did not roughly

and inconsiderately denounce these hopes. On the other hand, he taught a spiritual Messiahship and a spiritual and moral Kingdom of God which were so at variance with the popular hopes and expectations that even his most intimate and loyal disciples could only slowly apprehend and assimilate them. He announced, therefore, that he was come not to destroy, but to fulfil, the Law and the Prophets; and he put his new and revolutionary teachings in the form of parables, which would in time be understood by the more thoughtful and spiritual, but would not, by the novelty of their truth, instantly repel those who were less advanced. This sympathetic method arose from no selfish desire for power or popularity; for he took no step to avoid the death which came to him as a result of his righteous life and the novelty and unpopularity of his teaching. He was fearless, but not reckless, in his teaching of truth, connecting himself and his teaching with the great truths of the Scriptures, while correcting and transcending them and the current interpretation of them as the teaching of the highest truth required.

THE SUBCONSCIOUS AND RELIGION

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There is no subject about which popular psychology just now has so much to say as the "subconscious." Since the name came into wide use a dozen years ago, it has come to be regarded as something so definite and well understood as to be itself the explanation of many other things. Its bearing upon questions of religious experience has been particularly emphasized, and, in fact, it is largely on this account that it has aroused so much popular interest. In short, the word "subconscious" is spoken so glibly and taken to be the self-evident solution of so many spiritual problems that it will be worth our while to consider what we really know about it, and especially what its actual relation to religion may be. For, though often misused, there can be no doubt that the term stands for something very fundamental in our mental life, and that its connection with religion is in one way or another extremely important.

The conception of the subconscious, or the unconscious, originated, I suppose, with Leibniz. It was made popular as a philosophic doctrine by von Hartmann in his fascinating work, *Die Philosophie des Unbewussten*. But it was not until relatively recent times that it was imported from philosophy into psychology in the strict sense of the term. This was done partly by F. W. H. Myers and his followers, partly by various neurologists and medical men whose researches and practice led them into the field of pathological mental phenomena. Coming into psychology through this double doorway, the conception of the subconscious has had a rather varied development. The physicians have groped and grubbed and worked their way through a mass of abnormal and often very unpleasant cases, mining what facts they could; while the Myers school has been borne, often on the wings of intuition, to conclusions far more interesting, and, if true, metaphysically far more significant.

Myers's hypothesis was that the conscious self of each of us is

only a small part of the real self; that underneath the conscious personality there extends a much larger "subliminal" self, below the threshold of our immediate awareness, behind the door, dominating many of our actions and our thoughts by powers not known to us, and constituting the real and essential personality, of which the conscious self is but a broken gleam. He writes:—

The conscious self of each of us, as we call it,—the empirical, the supraliminal self, as I should prefer to say,—does not comprise the whole of the consciousness or of the faculty within us. There exists a more comprehensive consciousness, a profounder faculty, which for the most part remains potential only so far as regards the life of earth, but from which the consciousness and the faculty of earth-life are mere selections, and which reasserts itself in its plenitude after the liberating change of death.¹

This does not mean that we have two selves: it means that the one true self is the totality of which the supraliminal part is but a fraction.

He continues:—

I mean by the subliminal self that part of the self which is commonly subliminal; and I conceive that there may be, not only co-operations between these quasi-independent trains of thought, but also upheavals and alternations of personality of many kinds, so that what was once below the surface may for a time, or permanently, rise above it. And I conceive also that no self of which we can here have cognizance is in reality more than a fragment of a larger Self—revealed in a fashion at once shifting and limited through an organism not so framed as to afford it full manifestation.²

Within this subliminal part of us, as within the supraliminal part, there are various kinds of phenomena, some lofty, some "dissolutive." To illustrate this, Myers uses a simile which has become famous, the comparison, namely, of our empirical consciousness to the visible spectrum and of our subliminal faculties to the ether waves which we cannot see.

At both ends of this spectrum, I believe that our evidence indicates a momentous prolongation. Beyond the red end, of course, we already

¹ Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death, i, 12.

² Ibid., p. 15.

know that vital faculty of some kind must needs extend. We know that organic processes are constantly taking place within us which are not subject to our control, but which make the very foundation of our physical being. We know that the habitual limits of our voluntary act can be far extended under the influence of strong excitement. It need not surprise us to find that appropriate artifices—hypnotism and self-suggestion—can carry the power of our will over our organism to a yet further point.

The faculties that lie beyond the *violet* end of our psychological spectrum will need more delicate exhibition and will command a less ready belief. The active energy which lies beyond the violet end of our solar spectrum is less obviously influential in our material world than is the dark heat which lies beyond the red end. Even so, one may say, the influence of the ultra-intellectual or supernormal faculties upon our welfare as terrene organisms is less marked in common life than the influence of the organic or subnormal faculties. Yet it is *that* prolongation of our spectrum upon which our gaze will need to be most strenuously fixed. It is *there* that we shall find our inquiry opening upon the cosmic prospect, and inciting us upon an endless way.³

It is, according to Myers, from this violet end of the spectrum, so to speak—from the supernormal part of our subliminal selves—that come the insight of the poet and the intuition of the prophet. Art and religion, mysticism, love, invention—these and many other striking facts of human nature are thus made intelligible by one hypothesis. “An ‘inspiration of genius’ will be in truth a *subliminal uprush*, an emergence into the current of ideas which the man is consciously manipulating of other ideas, which he has not consciously originated, but which have shaped themselves beyond his will, in profounder regions of his being.”

All readers of the *Varieties of Religious Experience* will remember how much Professor James was influenced by these views of Myers. Not that he accepted Myers’s hypothesis in its totality. James was too keen a psychologist and too empirical a philosopher to consider Myers’s view a demonstrated truth. Nor did he feel at all sure that the subconscious part of the mind had sufficient unity to be regarded as a personality. The evidence, in his opinion, was as yet far too scanty for us to come to any conclusion on the exact nature and organization of these subliminal facts. But he was convinced that the conscious self came into

³ Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death, p. 18.

touch with, and was influenced by, psychic forces that psychology has as yet hardly recognized. This he regards as of prime importance to the subject of psychology. "We have," said he, "in the fact that the conscious personality is continuous with a wider self through which saving experiences come, a positive content of religious experience which, it seems to me, is literally and objectively true as far as it goes." And his own "over-belief" was that our being upon its further side plunges "into an altogether other dimension of existence from the sensible and merely 'understandable' world."

It is not surprising that a view in itself so romantic as Myers's hypothesis of the subliminal self, presented with such charm of style, and having the sympathy, if not the positive support, of our greatest psychologist, should make a very strong appeal not only to that large class which is ever eager for the mysterious, but to many serious thinkers, theologians, and religious men, who find in the works of Myers and James a new source of religious hope and faith. Had not this discovery of the subconscious self come, indeed, in the very nick of time, when the old foundations were being undermined by criticism and thrown down by science? What an unforeseen, unhoped for reversal of the rôle of science this was! No longer the foe, science was now become the ally of faith. Hereafter Higher Criticism and Rationalism and Naturalism might do their worst. Only the outworks of religion were open to their attack, and the man of faith might when he chose retire to the impregnable fortress of his Subconscious Self.

The rapidity with which this view has spread is one of the most interesting facts in the intellectual history of recent years, and a witness to the wide-felt need of a belief in something somehow supernatural. The popular magazines have got hold of it, and the man in the street knows that there are two of him. Preachers have made their congregations familiar with this new basis for religion, and books written by scientific—and by unscientific—men have taken it for granted. I quote a typical passage from one of them:

"The subconscious mind is a normal part of our spiritual nature. There is reason to believe that it is purer, more sensitive to good and evil, than our conscious mind. . . . Though it is doubtless

more generic and in closer contact with the Universal Spirit than reason, yet its creations bear the imprint of individual genius.”⁴ Another writer puts it thus: “Man’s mind is something far larger than he is conscious of: his consciousness is but a speck of light illuminating one part of his whole self. . . . Or, to put the matter in a still simpler metaphor, the mind is like an iceberg of which the greater part is hidden under the sea.”⁵ A distinguished theologian varies the figure, likening the mind not to an iceberg, but—as well as I can make it out—to a sort of bottle with a narrow neck and no bottom. The narrow neck is our consciousness, the main part of the vessel is our subconscious, and from it “filters” up the contents of our minds. Moreover, “the narrow-necked vessel has an opening at the bottom, which is not stopped by any sponge. Through it there are incomings and outgoings, which stretch away into infinity, and in fact proceed from, and are, God Himself.”⁶

It is evident that we are here dealing with a question of prime importance for more things than psychology. If the mind is the sort of thing described above, we ought to know it; and we ought to consider carefully the evidence on which the conclusion is based. To get at the evidence, however, on which the belief in the subconscious rests is made doubly difficult by the fact that the term in question is exceedingly ambiguous. Like other amiable beasts of burden, it has been so overworked that it is now good for little but a vacation—a reward which it might be well to grant. The many meanings which it has had to bear can, however, be reduced to three or possibly four principal ones, which we shall now examine in turn.

The first of these uses of the word “subconscious” makes it synonymous with the *fringe* or *background* of the mind. This is, of course, a part of our immediate experience, of our direct awareness, with nothing subliminal or supernormal about it. If our consciousness be represented by a series of concentric circles, the innermost of these will stand for the centre of closest attention, and the outermost zone for the fringe-region or back-

⁴ Elwood Worcester, *Religion and Medicine*, p. 42.

⁵ Dreamer, *Body and Soul*, p. 39.

⁶ William Sanday, *Christologies Ancient and Modern*.

ground. Between the two there is no break, no "dissociation," but one shades off into the other by a gradual decrease in vividness of content. This outer zone of our consciousness, however, though not attended to, is often of decisive importance in guiding both our thought and our action. We seldom realize all the factors that go to determine our decisions and our judgments. The syllogism is really a very poor representative of the way we think. There is a great deal more in our consciousness at any moment than we pay attention to; and this great, vague, unanalyzed mass of what Marshall calls our "sub-attentive consciousness" furnishes a large part of the data for our judgments, and often forms our opinions when we think we have reasoned our way to them. "The inventor, in working on his particular invention, has a mass of accumulated material and experience, indispensable for the development of the invention, but which is in the background of his consciousness. Similarly, the mathematician, in solving his problem, which forms the focus of his consciousness, possesses a body of knowledge or a mass of material which, though it lies in the periphery of his consciousness, still forms the mainstay of his particular investigation."⁷ Both our rougher and more general opinions and our more exact discriminations depend in large measure on what Jastrow calls "mass impressionism"—the total unanalyzed effect which the object in question has upon the background of our minds. The bank cashier may be able to detect the counterfeit bill with unfailing certainty, and yet be quite unable to tell you how he does it, or to describe with any exactness the earmarks of genuine paper money.

The influence of the background upon life and action is no less marked. In Professor Ward's opinion, the background or "continuum," as he calls it, is the original form of psychic life, and it is from it as a matrix that all the more sharply defined forms of consciousness have developed. It is not at all to be considered as a mere reservoir of sensations unattended to. Besides the sensations and the hazy ideas, and more primitive and fundamental than they, there are in the fringe all manner of latent and incipient impulses, attitudes, tendencies to reaction, partially suppressed feelings, wishes, volitions. "The instinctive

⁷ Sidis and Goodhart, *Multiple Personality*, p. 241.

desires and impulses have their roots in it, and get their power from it; the inborn reactions upon the environment, so far as they are conscious, the native antipathies and tendencies, our deepest loves and hates—all these are parts of it and grow up out of it.” Moreover, as I have written elsewhere,

It is the inheritor of our past, and forms what might be called a feeling memory. At every moment our whole outlook is colored by our past impressions and ideas. These are not present as such—they are not distinctly remembered—but a general feeling-tone and tendency to reaction is established by them and is modified by each event of life; in short, the total feeling background is affected by all our thoughts and experiences in such a way that they influence every passing moment. Our total past experience is in a sense summed and massed in the background, and thus becomes a compendium of our history. But it is much more than that; it is largely the store-house of heredity as well. It is in the line of direct descent, and inherits an endless amount of wisdom gained with so much toil by our entire ancestry.⁸

Thus it has a kind of “*racial* or *instinctive* wisdom which seems to put it in touch, in a perfectly natural manner, with forces hidden from the clearly conscious personality and which makes it wiser in many ways than the individual.”

There is nothing mysterious about this, nothing supernatural, nothing that is in any sense a discovery. The fringe region is in no way “higher” or “purer” than the centre of consciousness. It contains evil as well as good, or, rather it contains neither the one nor the other, but the materials for both. Only conscious personality is moral—nothing is good except a good will. The background is only a background; it is there not for its own sake but for the sake of the total personality. The best and purest aspect of the mind, the aspect of it most highly developed and the most nobly human, is to be found not in the obscure shadows of the background, but in the clear sunlight of full consciousness.

A second meaning sometimes given to the term “subconscious” makes it identical with the unconscious, and interprets the unconscious as the purely physiological. It is a generally accepted hypothesis that brain facts accompany mind facts, either as causal substratum or as correlate. While it has not been absolutely

⁸ Psychology of Religious Belief, pp. 15 and 23.

demonstrated, it seems most probable that certain brain events are so correlated with certain mind events that the former are regularly followed or accompanied by the latter. If this is true, then many of the phenomena of consciousness are to be explained by reference to the unconscious, that is, to physical phenomena in the nervous system. Moreover, the physiological mechanism of the body performs many purposeful acts without direction of consciousness, such for example as the numerous organic, reflex, and instinctive movements. May we not, therefore, explain the various phenomena commonly attributed to the action of the "subconscious" as due to the unconscious, that is, to the automatic activity of the nervous system? Many of these phenomena were thus explained by Doctor Carpenter over sixty years ago as due to "unconscious cerebration," and a large number of psychologists today insist that there is nothing in the facts that have come to light since Carpenter's *Mental Physiology* was written to force us to any other principle of explanation.

It is plain enough, however, that this explanation will suit neither the Myers school nor the majority of the pathologists. Nor are these gentlemen any better satisfied with the first meaning of the word "subconscious" suggested above. They will insist that the subconscious is not merely the physiological, and that it is not to be identified with the content of the fringe. For them the real question of the subconscious, therefore, is whether this fringe material is the last thing in the way of psychic stuff, or whether there is genuine consciousness not felt by the personal centre and yet connected with the same physical organism. Does the consciousness of which we are aware exhaust all the psychical phenomena centring in our bodies, or are there pulses of consciousness entirely outside the circle of our awareness? In other words, to use at last an unambiguous term, is there such a thing as a *co-consciousness*?

I said above that there were three or possibly four meanings which the word "subconscious" at times bore. Its interpretation as a *co-consciousness* is, of course, the third of these. The fourth, if there be a fourth, is very hard to state. We sometimes find the word "subconscious"—or more commonly the word "unconscious"—"*das Unbewusste*," "*l'inconscient*"—used to

mean some kind of psychic state which is yet unconscious. Bergson, for example, appeals at times to such unconscious mental states. Freud, in some parts of the *Traumdeutung*, insists upon unconscious psychic states in no uncertain terms, and in one passage quotes Professor Lipps as an upholder of the same view.

Just what can be meant by "unconscious psychic states" it is a little hard to see. The term, of course, immediately suggests round squares and true falsehoods. Freud's own explanation of the anomaly seems to be that it is "something, I know not what." It is, he insists, "the genuinely real psychic [das eigentlich reale psychische], as completely unknown to us as to its inner nature as is the reality of the outer world, and given to us through the data of consciousness just as incompletely as the outer world is given through the sense organs."

This appeal to the unknowable to explain the contradictory is not very enlightening. Hence some of his admirers—and who that has read the *Traumdeutung* can fail to be of that number?—insist on other interpretations of the *Unbewusste*. Dr. Bernard Hart suggests that the word as used by both Freud and Jung should be taken merely as a concept, a short-hand expression for the manipulation of our experience, rather than as a name for anything thought of as really existing. Other readers of Freud, in spite of the passage referred to above, will insist upon interpreting his "Unbewusstes" in terms of co-conscious mental states. And, in fact, if the term is to be taken as referring to anything real, it is hard to see what else it can mean. Hence we shall now turn to the question of the existence and the nature of the co-conscious.

The facts to which appeal is made to prove the existence of a co-consciousness are of two general classes: first, those found in normal subjects; and, second, those found in abnormal subjects, whether their abnormal condition be natural or induced temporarily by artificial methods. Limits of space make it impossible to present here a critical exposition of the facts in question, and we must, therefore, content ourselves with the conclusions (so far as there are such) to which the weight of scientific opinion inclines. In brief, then, the evidence does not seem to

be such as to force us to the hypothesis of a co-consciousness in normal human beings. Many facts, indeed, have been adduced which strongly suggest such a view, but none that make it indispensable. They can, I think, invariably be explained in terms of the fringe or of the nerve processes, or by the accepted laws of psychology. Several competent psychologists, to be sure, would not concur in this view, and further investigation may yet show that their position is preferable to the one presented above. The fact, however, that these psychologists regard the split-off states of normal persons as of rare occurrence and of slight importance, and the difficulty of drawing any hard and fast line between normal and abnormal subjects, make the difference between the two positions relatively unimportant. It is almost indifferent whether we say that normal persons may occasionally have fleeting, split-off conscious states, or that normal persons never have such states, but that many or most of us are occasionally abnormal.

When we turn to the pathological cases, we meet a very different state of things. The evidence here for co-conscious mental life is so strong that, if one adopts an empirical point of view and refuses to decide the matter on *a priori* considerations, it is very difficult to resist the conclusion that within the same mind there may exist at the same time both a principal and a subordinate centre of conscious life, split off from, though mutually influencing, each other. I must hasten to add that this conclusion is not shared by all psychologists. It is, however, the opinion of the majority of those who have had first-hand experience with these pathological phenomena. The facts which they cite seem to show indisputable marks of the presence of consciousness, and of some consciousness other than that of the patient's leading personality. The only alternative explanation is unconscious cerebration; and the ascription of so much intelligence to purely physiological processes as that hypothesis would require would be enough to make one seriously doubt the consciousness of one's fellow-beings.

It may indeed very well be, as suggested above, that even in some of us so-called normal persons there are at times fleeting gleams of conscious life split off from the main psychic stream;

or, if we prefer another way of putting it, that any of us may occasionally become temporarily abnormal. After the investigations of Prince and other alienists, it is difficult to doubt that mental shocks and emotional excitement tend not only to confuse but to dissociate consciousness. If this be the case, there will be all degrees of dissociation, ranging from cases of complete or approximate mental unity down through greater and greater degrees of dissociation, until at last we find several fairly independent and fairly unified separate "personalities" or "complexes" functioning in one body, or until even these are disintegrated into more elementary groups of psychic states, each narrower, less unified, and less stable than the last.

The nature and content of the co-conscious states of persons only incipiently abnormal—and of normal persons, if normal persons have them—can be pretty well made out from some of Prince's and Sidis's investigations. They are invariably limited and disintegrated, and usually quite unimportant and unrelated to any purpose. Sensations, feelings, and impulses unconnected, and simply flickering into life and out again, like the light of the firefly in the dark, constitute as a rule their content. They are seldom combined into anything that can be called a *thought*. They are without self-consciousness, and there is "no evidence to show that the dissociated consciousness is capable of wider and more original synthesis than is involved in adapting habitual acts to the circumstances of the moment." "There is no hard and fast line between the conscious and the subconscious, for at times what belongs to one passes into the other, and vice versa. The waking self is varying the grouping of its thoughts all the time in such a way as to be continually including and excluding the subconscious thoughts." The split-off states, except in thoroughly pathological cases or in artificially produced abnormal conditions, give rise to no "automatisms" or independent and disconnected actions and hallucinations.⁹

In extreme cases, such as that of Miss Beauchamp and BA

⁹The substance of this paragraph and the quotations in it are taken from Prince, "Some of the Present Problems of Abnormal Psychology," *Psychological Review*, xii, 135-139. See also Sidis and Goodhart, *Multiple Personality*, *passim*.

reported by Morton Prince, we have, indeed, in the co-conscious, something approximating much more closely to the popular notion of the "Subconscious Self." Miss Beauchamp's third alternating "complex" (known as "Sally") not only claimed to be co-conscious—and proved it to the satisfaction of Dr. Prince and most of his readers—but developed also a very definite character, which she retained with consistency from her first appearance until finally "squeezed."¹⁰ She was, namely, throughout a rather pert, interesting, immature young girl, differing noticeably in tastes and manners from both the other personalities, considerably inferior to both in knowledge and intellectual power, and markedly inferior to one of them in conscience and character. In Dr. Prince's other case, B, who has given pretty conclusive evidence of being co-conscious with A,¹¹ maintains, like Sally, a perfectly distinct and consistent character throughout. She does not resemble Sally in immaturity, but is decidedly inferior to the complete and normal integrated personality. It should be added that both these co-conscious "personalities" have written their autobiographies, that of B in particular being highly intelligent and instructive. It is, to be sure, questionable whether either "Sally" or "B" is as much of a personality as each claims to be. No doubt they are well-developed, *alternating* personalities, but it is far from clear that as co-conscious entities they have sufficient unity and completeness to deserve the title *personality* or *self*. My colleague, Professor John E. Russell, has made the suggestion that in the co-conscious state such "personalities" are merely "complexes" or groups of ideas, and that the claim of each to unbroken co-conscious *personal* life is due to an illusion of the memory. However this may be, it is interesting to note that "Sally" and "B," the only "co-conscious selves" whose histories have been investigated, have originated out of "complexes" or groups of feelings, ideas, and impulses within the central consciousness, complexes of the same sort as are to be found in any of us. Who is there that has not

¹⁰ See Morton Prince, *Dissociation of a Personality*, 1906, *passim*.

¹¹ See Prince, "Experiments to Determine Co-conscious Ideation," *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, iii, 33-42. Prince and Peterson, "Experiments in Psycho-galvanic Reactions from Co-conscious Ideas," *Ibid.*, iii, 114-131.

noted in his own experience how the emotion due to some insult, slight, or injury can gather to itself special ideas and tendencies and become a little centre of relative independence within the mind?

It is in some such general way that a dissociated "personality" originates. It does not start as a "subconsciousness." It was not there in the beginning like the submerged two-thirds of the iceberg, nor like the bottom of the "narrow-necked vessel" which is "not stopped by any sponge." It originates as other ideas originate, and is as much a matter of the common day as they. There is nothing mysterious or supernatural about its origin—unless, indeed, disease be supernatural. And this is true, not only of its origin but of its content and its powers. The co-conscious ideas, complexes, and personalities that have been investigated show little evidence of being in any way "higher" and "purer" than the normal personality. It was perhaps natural to suppose that the subconscious was wiser and better than the normal self—until it had been seen. But now at length we have two subconscious selves "flowering" and walking out upon the scenes and writing their autobiographies; and they turn out to be nothing very wonderfully wise, but just B and Sally.

I have dealt thus at length with the co-conscious because it is as a co-conscious that the "subconscious" is usually interpreted by popular writers, preachers, and lecturers. It is important for the serious student of this subject not to be misled by glowing pictures of the "Undermind," but to realize that the co-conscious, so far as the evidence goes, is either non-existent or practically negligible in normal persons; while in pathological subjects, though sometimes, indeed, the source of valuable ideas and useful actions, it is always limited and inferior to the waking self, and likely to be very far from beautiful or sublime. What I have said of the co-conscious, however, must not be taken as a failure to recognize the immense importance and the unquestionable value in each of us of the "subconscious" in the broader sense. And in this broader sense the word "subconscious" may still be of use. If we put together under this term all those factors of ourselves which are not to be identified with the attentive consciousness—the physiological, the fringe, and the co-conscious

in those who possess it—we cannot fail to be impressed with the enormous influence exerted by these upon our lives.

I have already spoken of the importance of the fringe region, and I need add nothing here; nor need I point out how our nervous systems unite us to the distant past of the race and to our own past, preserving for us both instincts and habits, and enabling us to use our memories and thus utilize our past experience. If we interpret the subconscious as meaning both the fringe and the nervous system, we may say that it is largely this that makes us what we are. "The whole of our past psychical life," says Bergson, "conditions our present state, without being its necessary determinant; while also it reveals itself in our character." It is plain, therefore, how important an influence the subconscious in this broader sense exerts upon each man's religion. To the work of Starbuck and James, in particular, we owe a great deal for the insight they have given us in this matter. A man's religion is not merely a matter of his clear-cut conscious processes: it is bound up with his whole psycho-physical organism. Truly, he who loves God loves him with all his heart and soul and mind and strength. He loves God not only with his soul and mind, but with his body, too. Our religion goes deeper down into our lives than most things, and is knit up with all that we are. It springs out of our connection with the past; it involves our individual, and even our racial, history; it is one aspect of what we are and all we hope to be. This is the truth at the heart of much modern writing about the subconscious and religion—only in "ein bisschen andern Worten."

The influence of the subconscious upon the religion of most of us is due to our racial inheritance and our individual history. By nature and heredity we come into the world with certain instincts and needs and ways of reacting which respond to our condition of dependence in such a way as to make most of us "incurably religious." Here, then, is one of the "subconscious" roots of our religion. The other root of it, as I have said, is to be sought in the particular environment and experience of the individual. We are born as babies into a world of grown-ups, and our parents, our teachers, and, in fact, society as a whole bring the irresistible might of their combined influence to bear

upon our pygmy selves to make us religious. This influence is never outgrown. Though in our later reasonings we may think we have freed ourselves from it, it is present and ineradicable in our subconsciousness, influencing our conscious lives in ways that we do not recognize. The whole drama of our maturer years is presented before a background determined almost entirely by our social inheritance and our early experiences. Freud has recently shown how very large a part of the material of our dreams is made up of childhood memories—memories, some of which had seemed to be quite forgotten. Sir Francis Galton years ago pointed out the fact that even in our waking hours our minds are incredibly full of ideas to which we pay little or no attention, a large part of which are memories drawn from childhood and youth.

And it is not merely ideas and visual and verbal images that fill the backgrounds of our minds. More important and influential are the moods, emotions, impulses, and prejudices, the “complexes” which have their roots in some half-forgotten past and twine themselves all through our mental history. Their abiding place is in the darker region of the fringe, or possibly in the quite unconscious cells of the nervous system, but they influence our sentiments, our creeds, our actions, in ways that might surprise us, were they fully recognized. Especially influential in determining the background of our lives are our desires and early ideals. Freud has shown (with some exaggeration, to be sure) how large a rôle desire plays in forming our dreams, and it is certain that not only in dreams but in our waking moments desire, whether suppressed or recognized, has a leading part in shaping our whole subconscious or unconscious life. Thus it comes about that the ideals, the longings, the ardent wishes of youth sink into the subliminal region, and constitute a large part of its ultimate return contribution to conscious life. Hence the ideal nature of much that springs from the subliminal region of lofty souls. Hence also much of the religious trend that we find shaping so large a part of our lives. The religious ideas, promptings, emotions, and ways of viewing things, impressed upon us during youth, or resulting naturally from inherited tendencies, become so ingrained into the very texture of our minds that we can never

get away from them. They tinge and influence our feelings, our opinions, and our total reaction upon the world in ways that we know and in ways that we know not.

This is another way of saying that the subconscious is eminently conservative. And in whatever way you interpret the "subconscious" this remains true. The conservative nature of the physiological is painfully evident to every one who has tried to break a habit. And after what has been said on previous pages of this essay, nothing need be added to show how the fringe-region and the co-conscious treasure up the past and use it to influence the present and predetermine the future. This is the ultimate explanation of religious conservatism. Theology, the explicit formulation of religious belief, usually lags behind science and philosophy because the two latter make sense perception and clear reason their criteria, whereas religion is a matter of the whole man, and is determined to a very great extent by the racial and personal past, by the ideas that have become ingrained and are now revered, and by the feeling of profound respect for tradition, all of which, though they are at times matters of attentive reasoning, have their roots very largely in the background of the mind or even in the purely habitual reactions of the nervous system.

The great source of the content of the subconscious is, then, the conscious—the experience of the past, both the race and the individual being taken into account. Is there any other source for this content—some supernatural source, different in kind from that already described? I do not see that psychology can answer this question with any definite proofs. It will, of course, proceed on the assumption that there is no such source, until the necessity of the contrary hypothesis is demonstrated. A super-human source of revelation, though something in which the philosopher may well believe, is not something which the man of science can ever verify. Leaving aside hypotheses that involve the supernatural, he must seek—very likely in a plodding and prosaic fashion—to find out what can be done with the natural. And in our particular problem his methods have not as yet proved inadequate. The prophets and mystics have, indeed, been greatly influenced by the subconscious, but it is far from clear that there

is anything mysterious about the ultimate source of this subconscious influence. The highest ideals of the community or the nation, accepted with enthusiasm and emotion by the youthful mind, "apperceived" by the great mass of man's instincts and inherited impulses, pondered over carefully and repeatedly, and allowed to continue their activity in the fringe or in the form of unconscious cerebration—these certainly go far towards explaining so much of the messages of the prophets as need be attributed to subconscious origin. Nor does this view necessarily exclude the possibility of divine influence, inspiration, and communion with God. It is difficult to see why God should choose to communicate with a split-off complex or a brain cell rather than with the man himself. What is highest in the religious genius is to be sought in his conscious states rather than in some form of insensibility.

It has often been suggested that telepathy is one source of the subconscious, and this is of course quite possible. The evidence in favor of the existence of telepathy is strong, and, if there really is such a thing, the subconscious—however interpreted—would very likely be influenced by it. There is, however, no good reason for regarding the subconscious as the exclusive channel of such influence. In advance of empirical data on the subject, telepathy, if it exist, is as likely to affect one mind state as another, and the conscious mind seems quite as likely to be directly open to its influence as the subconscious. And, of course, even though it should be proved that telepathy from other minds is one source of the content of the subconscious, it would still remain true (in default of evidence to the contrary) that the *ultimate* source of this content should be sought in the social environment—that is, in the past experience, the ideas, ideals, impulses, and longings of the race.

Though the ultimate source of the content of the subconscious is thus perfectly natural, its influence upon the mind of the individual often makes itself felt in ways that inevitably seem to him extremely mysterious, and that are consequently interpreted by him and by those who know him as tokens of some supernatural power. Particularly is this true in the case of those who have a tendency toward abnormality. And, inasmuch as many of the most influential representatives of the religious life have

been at times and in some respects slightly psychopathic, this influence of the subconscious upon the conscious is of special interest to the student of religion. The psychologist, however, though understanding how natural, and indeed inevitable, it is for the religious individual to interpret the strange things that come into his mind as of supernatural origin, insists upon looking for a natural explanation. And this he finds in a series of phenomena outside the field of religion which exhibit the same peculiarities. Thus he is enabled to subsume his religious facts under the more general classes furnished him by psychology.

The religious facts which I have here in mind are such things as violent but unaccountable impulses to do certain things, fixed ideas whose source cannot be traced, "inspirational speaking," so far as this is not to be accounted for by the ordinary laws of association, motor automatisms, visions, and the like. These all bring with them the sense of external origination—of being *given* or imposed from without. Now this feeling is a well recognized characteristic of the working of the co-conscious, wherever found. Moreover, all the phenomena above referred to have parallels in non-religious cases, where the explanation is plainly to be had in terms of a dissociation of consciousness. The impulses and fixed ideas found in many religious persons are not different psychologically—though they be ethically at the antipodes—from the "phobias" that Freud is finding in the "unconscious" and Sidis in the "co-conscious." The "inspiration" of the prophet, like that of the poet or of the inventor, often seems to have its immediate source in the deeper and unconscious parts of his being. Just how the subconscious acts in these cases is of course not certain, but that there is some subconscious mechanism here at work, as even in our every-day search for a forgotten name, seems evident. The prophet ponders long over the condition of his people and the will of God. Then some day suddenly the sought-for solution rushes into his mind—he finds a message ready-made upon his tongue; and it is almost inevitable that he should preface it with the words: "Thus hath Yahweh showed me!" As for the extreme cases of religious visions and motor automatisms, one has only to look at a single page of the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* for parallels to both.

I would not be understood by this to imply that the religious geniuses who have been slightly psychopathic are *mere* "psychopaths." I have said, indeed, that dissociation probably is an abnormal state; but this means simply that it differs from the normal human condition. It does not mean that such dissociation is always an impediment to human usefulness. That the ordinary man should be without this characteristic is doubtless best for the race, just as it is best we should not all be poets or have the "artistic temperament." But that does not mean that we should be better off with no poets or artists. Prince is coming to the conclusion that, though the dissociated states (except of a most elementary sort) are abnormal, the susceptibility to them under quite common conditions is normal. It may very well be that for certain purposes dissociated mind states have their special value; they may, for instance, function more readily than purely physiological formations, thus enriching the controlling consciousness with more possible ideas from which the laws of association may choose, or possibly endowing the psycho-physical organism with more immediately available force. The value of such mental conditions, in any event, must be determined not by asking ourselves whether they are usual or result from usual physical or psychical conditions, but by looking to the results which they achieve. As James puts it, the true criterion of value is expressed in the words, "By their fruits ye shall know them, not by their roots." Now if we examine the fruits of such psychopathic dispositions we find that they are varied. In the great majority of cases they are bad, hence the emphasis I have put on the absurdity of looking to the "subconscious" as nobler and purer than the conscious self. But in the case of some noble but psychopathic personalities the split-off states do seem to be of real use; though even here, it must be remembered, the highest and noblest part of the man is his conscious personality. Especially in the case of many great religious leaders do we find psychopathic conditions that seem to have contributed a good deal toward making them the useful men they were. Consider, for example, Ezekiel, Mohammed, George Fox, Saint Paul!—the reader will be able to add to the list many other names. In these men and women much of the force which made them great and useful seems to have been

connected with their psychopathic disposition. Professor James writes:

In the psychopathic temperament we have the emotionality which is the *sine qua non* of moral perception; we have the intensity and tendency to emphasize which are the essence of practical vigor; and we have the love of metaphysics and mysticism which carry one's interests beyond the surface of the sensible world. What, then, is more natural than that this temperament should introduce one to regions of religious truth, to the corners of the universe, which your robust Philistine type of nervous system, forever offering its biceps to be felt, thumping its breast, and thanking Heaven that it hasn't a single morbid fiber in its composition, would be sure to hide forever from its self-satisfied possessor.¹²

In quoting thus from Professor James, however, I am going beyond the immediate subject of this essay, for the psychopathic state is not synonymous with the dissociated state, and a psychopath with all the advantages claimed for him in the passage just quoted need not possess a co-consciousness. The converse is certainly true—the great majority of those possessing dissociated mind states have none of the superiorities set forth by James. Moreover, while some kind of co-consciousness has probably characterized many of the religious leaders of the race, and while they have owed much of their influence to it, it still remains true, as it seems to me at least, that such dissociations can be of advantage only under special and unusual conditions, and, I may add, under conditions less likely to recur in the future than in the past. Split-off states are never an end, but are at best a means only. At best, they are sources of weakness as well as of strength. The highest type of man in the religious life as well as elsewhere is the unified and rational self. For our ideal we look not so much to Ezekiel as to Amos, not so much to Fox as to Luther, not so much to Paul as to Jesus.

¹² *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 25.

TWO STUDIES OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK

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The current essays to disentangle the literary history of the material which now forms our Gospel of Mark were described in an article by Professor Moulton in a recent number of this *Review*.¹ Of the attempts to solve the problem there mentioned two seem plausible enough to warrant fuller exposition in these pages. They are the reconstructions by which Professor Hermann von Soden,² of Berlin, and Professor Emil Wendling,³ of Zabern, have tried to resolve our Gospel into its constituent elements.

Von Soden begins by distinguishing two strands of narrative, so easily separable on grounds both of matter and style that the great differences between them betray two different sources of the material. As the clearest instance of the earlier strand, he takes the passage Mk. 2 1-3 6, which he contrasts with 4 35-5 43. In the former passage all the interest is centred in the words of Jesus, in the latter in the events themselves. "Let one," he says, "compare the story of the Gadarene demoniac, with its twenty verses, and the debate about fasting, with its five verses, and estimate the religious value of the thought expressed in the two sections." Similarly, the sections Mk. 7 32-37 and 8 22-26 (the healing of the deaf man and of the blind man) are quite distinct in character from such stories as those in 2 1-12 and 3 1-6. "In the former the miracle of healing is itself the subject of the representation; in the latter the miracle is merely a part of the story, the real subject of which is Jesus' forgiveness of sins and his violation of the Sabbath laws."

In this way Von Soden picks out his "*Kernstücke*." To these certainly belong the group of narratives in 1 21-39, 2 1, 3 6,

¹ "The Relation of the Gospel of Mark to Primitive Christian Tradition," *Harvard Theological Review*, III (1910), 403-436.

² *Die wichtigsten Fragen im Leben Jesu*. 1904.

³ *Urmarcus*. 1905. See also *Die Entstehung des Marcusevangeliums*. 1908.

12 13-44, 3 20-35, 6 1-6, 4 1-8, 4 26-32, 10 13-31; perhaps also 7 24-30, 6 14-16, 1 4-11. To these narratives, which go back to Peter, may also belong the brief notices concerning the stages of growth of the apostolic circle in 1 16-20, 3 13-19, 6 7-13, 8 27-9 1, 9 33-40, 13 9-13. To these passages Von Soden adds 13 1-6, 28-37. And he says that at the basis of the story of the days in Jerusalem, 11 1-12 12, and the passion narrative in chapters 14 and 15 lie narratives of a similar style, but he does not include the latter in his "*Kernstücke*."

The passages thus referred to Peter, or to the Petrine tradition, Von Soden prints in full, "undisturbed by all that our Gospel of Mark has interwoven with them."⁴ The result is extremely interesting. The Petrine nucleus of the Gospel appears as follows:

John the Baptist and the baptism of Jesus.

A Sabbath in Capernaum.

The offence of the Jews at Jesus' forgiveness of sins, at his association with sinners, at his breaking of the Sabbath, and at the fact that his disciples do not fast.

The attempt of the Jews to take him.

How Jesus meets the general misunderstanding.

Parables about the kingdom of God.

The question who shall enter that kingdom.

The development of the apostolic circle.

Glimpses into the future.

This certainly makes (after some readjustment in the order of certain of the sections) a remarkably straightforward and connected narrative. Von Soden's remarks concerning it are well worth quoting:

These narratives are without any embellishment or secondary interest. They are plastic and concrete in every feature. The local coloring is strikingly fresh, and yet is in no way artificial. No edifying remarks, no reflections; only deeds and striking sayings. No story requires its secret meaning to be explained by symbol or allegory. In no one of them does one feel any occasion to inquire for the meaning, which is always perfectly obvious. Situations and words are too original to have been invented. Everything breathes the odor of Palestine. Not a

⁴ For reasons which he does not explain he somewhat rearranges the sections.

reminiscence of Old Testament stories. Miracles appear only here and there, and incidentally. . . . The christological or soteriological question never constitutes the motive of a story. Not once is there any expression from the language of the schools; especially not from that of Paul. Words and sentences are reminiscent of the Aramaic. The figure of Jesus itself bears in every reference a human outline. He is stirred and astonished; he is angry and trembles; he needs recuperation, and feels himself forsaken of God. He will not have the thoughtless, conventional designation "good" addressed to him, and confesses that he does not know when all that he sees to be approaching shall be fulfilled. His mother and brothers fear that he may be out of his mind. This and much else is told in the simplest possible way. So Jesus lived; so he expressed himself; thus they received him; thus the apostolic circle was formed and developed—this is what the writer will tell.

It must be admitted that these sections of Mark have a very primitive character, and so far as their content is concerned might well go back to the Petrine tradition.

With these sections Von Soden contrasts the remaining parts of the Gospel, in which he finds not only much interruption of the primary narrative, but much interpretation, much allegorizing, much absence of actual situations, much reminiscence of Old Testament stories, much influence from Paul, and many reflections of the experiences of individual Christians and the Christian church. No one can work through this analysis without feeling that it is easy to distinguish between primary and secondary elements in the Gospel of Mark, and that Von Soden has at least pointed out many of the junctures between the two.

The critical analysis of Wendling is still more thoroughgoing. The basis of his discussion is the fourth chapter of Mark, where he thinks the primary and secondary material most easy to separate. Mark 4 1-9, 26-33, belong to the original. Verses 10-25 are later, having been inserted mechanically, yet so as to respect the older text; they have no organic connection with the rest of the chapter and even contradict its situation. Jesus is teaching from a boat, and other boats are with his; then, without indication of change of scene, in verses 10-25 he is alone with his disciples, who ask him the meaning of the parable of the sower. He gives his explanation, and, again without any

indication of change of situation, is in the boat, surrounded by the other boats, and the storm comes up and is stilled.

Moreover, this insertion (4 10-25) expresses theories of its author quite inconsistent with those of the writer of other parts of the Gospel. In other places Jesus speaks to all the people in parables "as they were able to hear him." He stretches out his hand over the crowd and says, "These are my mother and my sisters." He is the teacher of the multitude, who understand him better than his own family. There is nothing in his parables that needs explaining. But in 4 10-25 the theory of the writer is that the parables are "mysteries," enigmas which not only require to be explained (by the allegorical method), but are spoken for the express purpose of preventing the people from understanding. Indeed, without the key which Jesus gives, even the disciples do not understand them. Pauline influence is also obvious.⁵

Besides the interruptions of the narrative, two clews are thus given by which the work of a second writer may be detected. He has the "*Geheimnistheorie*" of the parables, and he has in thought and vocabulary reminiscences of the Pauline school. Applying these tests to another section which seems to interrupt the narrative where it stands, Wendling adds a second insertion, 3 22-30. This is the passage containing the controversy about Beelzebub, and it comes in inappositely between vss. 20, 21, which introduce, and vs. 31, which continues, the story of Jesus' family who have come to take him home. It seems to have been inserted in this place because the Pharisees likewise said, "He hath a devil." By repeating in vs. 30 the words *ἔλεγον ὅτι* which he found in vs. 21, the redactor or evangelist preserves for the continuation of the original story precisely the same connection it would have had without his interpolation; and by the use of the same words in vs. 22 he connects the interpolation with the opening narrative. His hand is to be seen in the superfluous repetition of words, especially in the repetition of the subject, as in 3 24, 25.⁶

⁵ Note especially the words *μυστήριον, μετὰ χαρᾶς λαμβάνειν, διωγμός, ἐπιθυμίαι, καρποφορεῖν*, and see Wendling, Urmarcus, p. 35, note 11.

⁶ Cf. 2 19^b, 20, also the work of Ev.

To these two insertions is added a third, Mk. 3 6-19. The motives running through this section are copied from narratives in other chapters. It contains much generalization and interpretation, both of which are marks of the work of the redactor or evangelist (Ev). It also refers to his "*Geheimnistheorie*."

Another is 1 34^b ("he suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him") on account of the implication in it of the same theory. Mk. 1 45 also does not fit where it is; the connection without it is good; it too implies the theory of the writer (part of his "*Geheimnistheorie*") that the more Jesus told people not to proclaim him the more they did so, and the more he tried to seclude himself the more they found him.

With these, again, on somewhat different grounds, and not so certainly, belong the little group of loosely strung sayings which are found in 6 7-11, 8 34-9 1, 9 40-50, 10 42-45, 11 23-25, 12 38-40, 13 9-13. The ground for assuming these to be additions is that these sayings are not closely connected in the passages in which they occur, and that they share this characteristic with the similar group of disconnected sayings in the first and best attested interpolation, 4 21-25.

In 1 1-3, 14^b, 15, the word *εὐαγγέλιον* arouses a natural suspicion. The same word occurs in four other places (8 35, 10 29, 13 10, 14 9), all of which are in passages which are suspicious upon other grounds. Consequently, with the three instances in chapter 1, they are to be ascribed to Ev.

With the exception of the interpolation in 4 10-25, the section 1 16-4 33 appears to be a unit, and belongs to the oldest stratum. But with 4 35, says Wendling, begins a new section, easily distinguished from that just mentioned. It copies the motives and characteristics of other sections.⁷ The writer is to be discriminated, however, not merely from the writer of the earliest stratum, but from the author of the insertions already identified. None of the criteria of the latter's manner appear in the author of the section beginning at 4 35. He shows no trace of Pauline conceptions, has none of Jesus' prohibitions to the demons, his "*Heimlichkeit*" is of a different sort, and goes back to Old

⁷ Cf. 5 2 with 1 23; 5 6, 7 with 1 24; 5 8-13 with 1 25; 5 13 with 1 26; 5 14-17 with 1 27, and see Wendling, *Urmarcus*, p. 11.

Testament exemplars. Since the insertion in 4 10-25 presupposes the story of the storm on the lake in 4 35-5 43, this latter is older than the former. The writer of this section, 4 35-5 43, therefore stood between the writer of the original strand and the evangelist or redactor. The last writer (Ev) worked over the combined work of his two predecessors.

To the author who is intermediate between the first writer and the evangelist (M²) Wendling assigns twenty-nine different sections, some of considerable length and some of only a verse or part of a verse. They are as follows: 1 4-14^a, 4 35-5 42, 5 43^b, 6 14, 17-30, 35-44, 9 2-8, 14-27, 10 46-11 10, 14 12-20, 26-35^a, 36-37, 39-41^a, 42, 47, 51-56, 60-62^a, 63, 64, 66-72, 15 16-20, 23, 24^b, 25, 29-30, 33, 34^b-36, 38, 40-43, 46-16 7^a, 8—about 200 verses or parts of verses in all.

The contributions of the author of the Gospel (Ev) are more extensive than those of his predecessor. They comprise: 1 1-3, 14^b-15, 34^b, 39^b, 45, 2 15^b-16^a, 18^a, 19^b-20, 3 6-19, 22-30, 4 10-25, 30-32, 34, 5 43^a, 6 1-13, 15, 16, 30-31, 45-8 26, 30^b-33^a, 33^c-35, 38-9 1, 9-13, 28-50, 10 2-12, 24, 26-30, 32^b-34, 38-40, 45, 11 11-14, 18-25, 27^a, 12 14^b, 32-34^a, 38-44, 13 3-27, 30-32, 37, 14 8, 9, 21, 35^b, 38, 41^b, 57-59, 62^b, 15 39, 44, 45, 16, 7^b—in all about 270 verses or parts of verses.

This leaves to the original writer (M¹) the following sections: 1 16-34^a, 35-39^a, 40-44, 2 1-15^a, 16^b-17, 18^b, 19^a, 21-3 5, 20, 21, 31-4 9, 26-29, 33, 6 32-34, 8 27-30^a, 33^b, 36, 37, 10 1, 13-23, 25, 31-32^a, 35-37, 41-44, 11 15-17, 27^b-12 14^a, 14^c-31, 34^b-37, 13 1-2, 28-29, 33-36, 14 1-7, 10, 11, 22-25, 43-46, 48-50, 65, 15 1-15, 21, 22, 24^a, 26-27, 31-32, 34^a, 37,—in all about 212 verses or parts of verses.⁸

Wendling calls the writers of these three strands M¹, M², and Ev. Printing the texts of the first and second writers, M¹ and M², without rearrangement but with the omission of all matter assigned to Ev, he finds them to make a continuous story, well connected and without breaks. As to whether M¹ alone makes such a story, he is in doubt; and therefore as to whether

⁸ In the *Entstehung des Marcus-Evangeliums* (p. 204) Wendling arranges the verses from M¹ in chapters 13 and 14 as follows: 13 1-2, 33, 28-29, 34-36, 14 1-2, 10-11, 3-7, 22-25, 43-46, 48-50, 65. Some minor differences in the analysis, affecting words or clauses, are registered *ibid.*, p. 237.

M² found M¹ as a connected discourse or himself first assembled the sections of it in connection with his own additions. The passion story of M¹ by itself seems to be a connected account; it may therefore be assumed that so much of M¹ was found by M² as a whole and in its present order. Further, since the work of Ev in the passion story is so slight, it is to be assumed that the combination of M¹ and M² in this story was more carefully done than in many other parts, and also that for this part of the gospel history Ev possessed very few traditions which had not already been embodied in M¹ + M². This would agree with the natural assumption that the earliest part of the gospel tradition to be carefully treasured would be that relating to Jesus' death, and that only later was the attempt made to preserve with equal care the story of his whole public career.

When one remembers the fine-spun analyses of the historical books of the Old Testament, which, long ridiculed for their elaborateness, have finally been accepted by most scholars, one hesitates on this account alone to pronounce an adverse judgment upon Wendling's theory. Yet his analysis certainly seems to be over-elaborate. It is, indeed, helpful to the student of the Gospel to distinguish between the more obvious work of Ev and the earlier document (or material) upon which he worked. All students will feel this with reference to chapter 4, and the advantage in chapter 3 is perhaps only less great. Still more welcome is the assignment of 6 45-8 27 to Ev. The particular stumbling-block of this section is its feeding of the four thousand, so manifestly copied from the feeding of the five thousand. That one and the same author should have written both these accounts has seemed strange to many readers. But this duplication is as easily disposed of upon Von Soden's theory as upon Wendling's. Von Soden's analysis into two strata (without the assumption of two *writers*) is much simpler than Wendling's analysis into three, representing not merely different strata of tradition, as in Von Soden's hypothesis, but different *writers*. Wendling's theory is more secure where it goes with Von Soden's, and less convincing where it goes beyond it. In other words, some distinction has in any case to be made between the final writer of the Gospel and the earliest tradition upon which he

worked; and Wendling has indicated the criteria which such a distinction must employ. Von Soden's division of the Markan material into a Petrine and a later source amounts to the same thing. The two critics do not differ very greatly about the passages which they regard as secondary. Von Soden's Petrine narrative does not differ greatly from Wendling's $M^1 + M^2$. But the line of demarcation between M^1 and M^2 , and Wendling's reasons for drawing this, are not as self-evident as the line which Wendling and Von Soden agree in drawing between the earlier document, or source, and the work of the evangelist.

A tabulation of the results shows the following agreements and disagreements between Von Soden's Petrine narrative and Wendling's $M^1 + M^2$.

Von Soden: 1 4-11 16-20 21-39 2 1-28

Wendling: 1 4-14^a 16-34^a 35-39^a 40-44 2 1-15^a 16^b-17 18^b 19^b 21-28

Von Soden: 3 1-6 13-19 21-35 4 1-9 21-32

Wendling: 3 1-5 20 21 31-35 4 1-9 26-29 33 35-41 5 1-42 43^b

Von Soden: 6 6-16

8 27-38

9 1 33-40

Wendling: 6 14 17-30 32-44 8 27-30^a 33^b 36 37 9 2-8 14-27

Von Soden: 10 13-45

Wendling: 10 1 13-23 25 31 32^a 35-37 41-52 11 1-10 15-17 27^b-33

Von Soden: 12 13-44

13 1-6 28-37

Wendling: 12 1-14^a 14^a-31 34^b-37

13 1-2 28-29 33-36

Wendling: 14 1-7 10-20 22-35^a 36-37 39-41^a 42-56 60-62^a 63-72 15 1-38 40-43
46-47 16 1-7^a 8

The comparison shows Wendling's analysis to be much more complex than Von Soden's. This results from his separation of his main document into two strands. It also shows that Wendling assigns considerably more to $M^1 + M^2$ than Von Soden gives to his Petrine source. This Wendling can afford to do, since he supposes two documents instead of one. The matter assigned by Von Soden to the Petrine source is in part assigned by Wendling to M^1 and in part to M^2 . Of the 177 verses assigned by Von Soden to his Petrine tradition, up to 13 37 (where it comes to an end), Wendling assigns about 124 to M^1 and only 10 to M^2 . Though he assigns some verses to M^1 which Von Soden

does not give to the Petrine source, and omits some (assigning them to Ev) which Von Soden does so assign, yet up to 13 37 the M¹ of Wendling agrees very closely with the Petrine source of Von Soden. After 13 37 the material assigned to M¹ and M² is about equally divided between them. Wendling makes no claims for the Petrine origin of his M¹ or M², but after these are subtracted from the whole Gospel there is a smaller amount left for the work of Ev than remains after Von Soden's Petrine source is subtracted. Since Wendling distinguishes between two sources and the work of a redactor, and Von Soden only between the Petrine tradition and other matter, this result also is what would be expected.

The relatively great agreement of the results of these two independent investigations seems to prove that it is possible to distinguish an earlier and a later tradition in the Gospel. Beyond this, the difference between Von Soden and Wendling is that the former makes no assertion about the identity of the final editor with the writer who recorded the Petrine tradition (and so permits the view that one hand wrote the whole Gospel, though part of his tradition went back to Peter and part came from later sources), while the latter asserts that Ev was a different person from either M¹ or M². Is this latter position of Wendling's capable of proof or disproof?

Perhaps the simplest criterion, and the one to be most safely applied, is that of vocabulary. Sir John Hawkins in his *Horae Synopticae* has compiled a list of 41 words which he regards as characteristic of Mark. Do these words occur indiscriminately in M¹, M², and Ev, or are they confined, some of them to M¹, some to M², and some to Ev? Or is there sufficient difference in the frequency with which these words occur in the three strata to justify the assumption of three different authors, and especially that Ev was distinct from the writers of the two documents? If not, the division between earlier and later material in Mark may still stand, while it was yet one and the same writer who put the whole Gospel together out of these earlier and later materials.

Characteristic of Mark is the historical present. Hawkins finds one hundred and fifty-one examples of this use in Mark as

against seventy-eight in Matthew (twenty-one of these taken from Mark) and four in Luke.⁹ Of these one hundred and fifty-one historical presents in Mark, forty-nine occur in passages assigned by Wendling to M¹, sixty-nine in M², and thirty-three in Ev.

Of the peculiarly Markan words, some prove nothing in this connection. *Εὐαγγέλιον* is used only by Ev (seven times). But since Wendling uses this word as a criterion of Ev's work in six out of the seven passages where it occurs, this adds nothing to the proof. *ἄλαλος* is used once by M¹, twice by M², and not at all by Ev. But since Ev adds no story of a deaf man, he has no occasion to use the word. (He does add a story of a stammering man, where he uses the word *μογιῶλος*.) *Κλάσμα*, used once by M² and three times by Ev, signifies little; since the three uses in Ev occur in the same passage, and this passage is taken from the passage in M² (the feeding of the multitude). *Σταχύς* occurs three times, all in M¹, but this also signifies nothing, since no passage in which it could occur is assigned to M² or Ev. *Ἐκπορεύομαι* is used twice each by M¹ and M², and seven times by Ev; but since five of these seven occurrences are in the same passage, they cannot establish any particular fondness for this word on the part of Ev as against the other two. *Ἀκάθαρτος*, three times in M¹, four times in M², and three times in Ev; *ἀπὸ μακρόθεν*, three times in M² and twice in Ev; *διδαχή*, three times in M², twice in Ev; and *φέρω*, five times in M¹, eight in M², and twice in Ev, do nothing toward establishing a distinct vocabulary for any one of the three.

Only three words seem to tell at all in favor of Wendling's hypothesis: *εἰσπορεύομαι* occurs once in M¹, twice in M², and five times, in separated passages, in Ev; *διαστέλλομαι* is used four times by Ev, in four different and separated passages, and not by M¹ or M²; *ἐκθαμβέομαι* occurs four times in M², in three different chapters, and not in M¹ or Ev. But the absence of the third of these words can certainly, and of the second probably, be accounted for by the subject-matter.

There is here practically no evidence of distinct vocabularies. And even if there were more than there is, it would be fully offset

⁹ Not including parables, where the present is not historical.

by the use of words having no necessary or natural connection with any particular subject-matter, and therefore equally likely to occur in any part of the gospel. Five such words are the adverbs εὐθύς, πάλιν, πολλά, οὐκέτι, οὕτω. Of these, the first (Mark's favorite and most characteristic word) is used seventeen times by M¹, fifteen by M², and ten by Ev. Considering the amount of narrative material ascribed to the three respectively, this usage seems to indicate an equal fondness for this word among them. The second (πάλιν) is used ten times by M¹, eight times by M², and nine times by Ev; πολλά (used adverbially) occurs three times in M¹, six in M², and three in Ev; οὐκέτι occurs twice in M¹, twice in M², three times in Ev; οὕτω is used once by M¹ and four times by Ev.

Characteristic of Mark is also his use of the imperfects ἔλεγεν and ἔλεγον. They are found fourteen times in M¹, fifteen in M², and twenty-one in Ev.

The cumulative effect of the above study makes strongly against Wendling's hypothesis of three different writers for Mark. At the very least, it shows that confirmatory evidence is entirely lacking where it would be most easily found and most convincing, while to those who cannot believe that three different writers should have had the same partiality for the same peculiar words it will be regarded as practically disproving the assumption that there were three authors.

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